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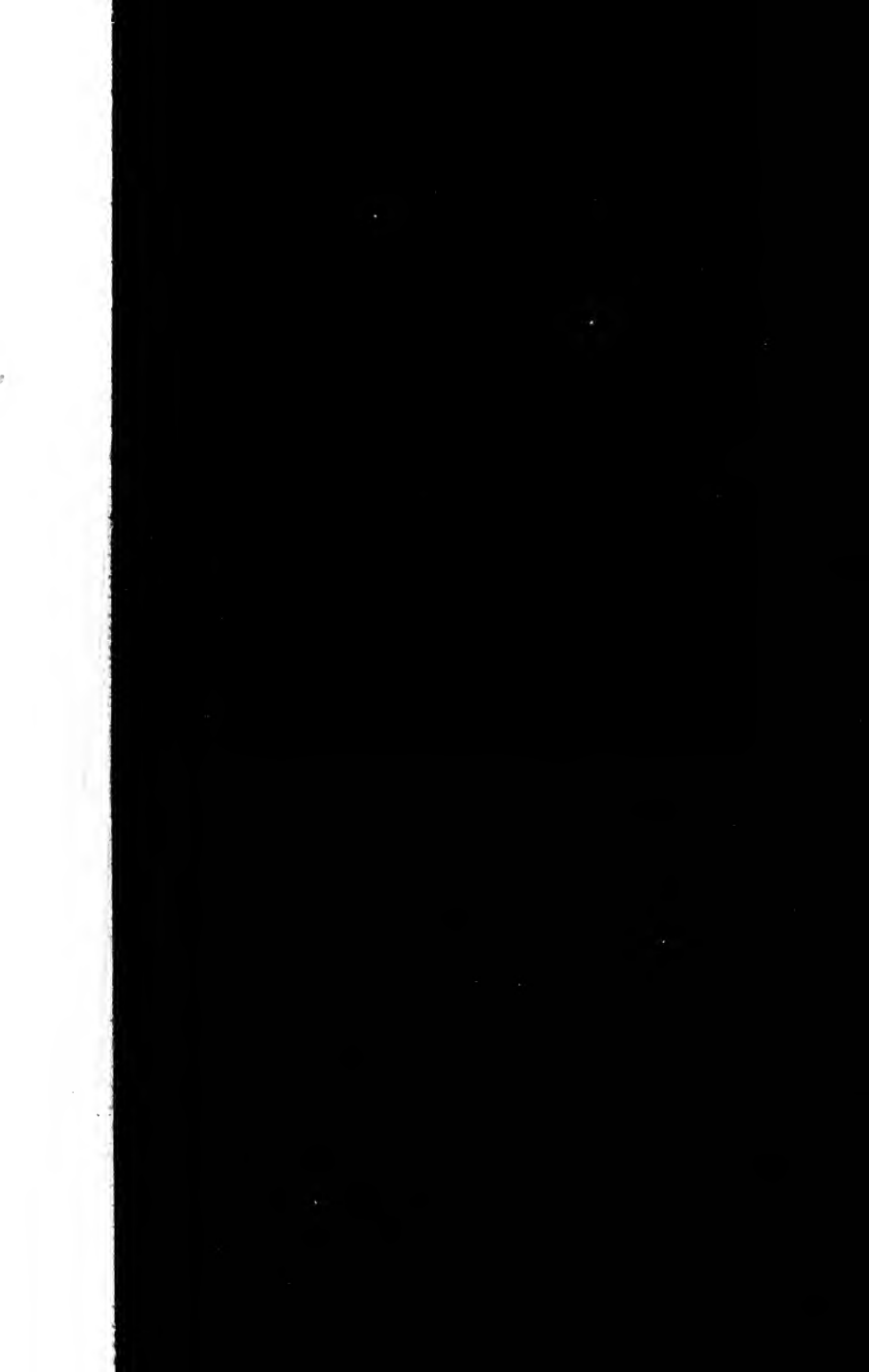
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PLAYERS

OF THE PERIOD

Arthur Goddard

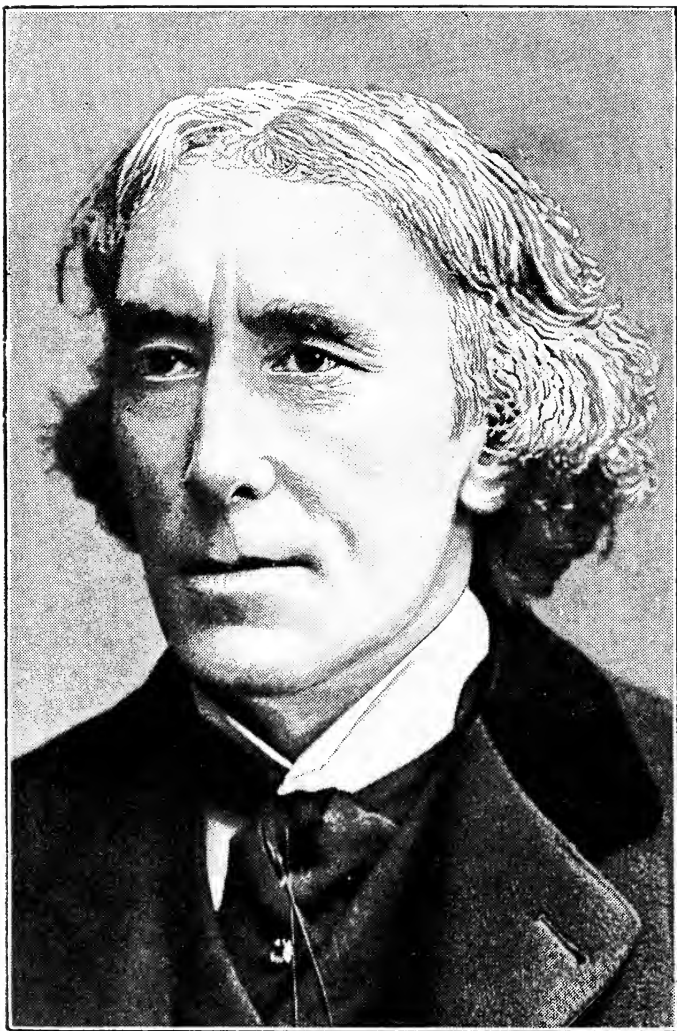




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Christmas 1891



FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY WALERY, 164, REGENT STREET, W.

"Who takes me, labels, Takes
me as I am."

Henry Irving!

To Sept. 1890.

PLAYERS OF THE PERIOD.

*A SERIES OF ANECDOTAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND
CRITICAL MONOGRAPHS OF THE LEADING
ENGLISH ACTORS OF THE DAY.*

BY

ARTHUR GODDARD,

With Numerous Illustrations

BY

"ALMA," FRED. BARNARD, ALFRED BRYAN, PHIL MAY,
J. BERNARD PARTRIDGE, GEORGES PILOTELLE,
F. H. TOWNSEND, ETC.,

PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE SUBJECTS AND AUTOGRAPH QUOTATIONS.

FIRST SERIES.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

NO attempt has been made in this volume to give a quite complete record of the careers and impersonations of the "Players of the Period" with whom it deals. Such an undertaking would be beyond the scope and foreign to the purpose of the work, the aim of which is rather, by the aid of reminiscences of popular actors in their principal parts, supplemented by personal and professional anecdotes and biographical notes, portraits, and character-sketches, to depict by pen and pencil representative players in the rôles with which they are most widely identified, and so stimulate the memories of playgoers, and call up in their minds countless recollections of pleasant hours owed to the arts of the actor and the dramatist, and to the glamour of the modern stage, which, by perfection of mechanical and artistic realism and illusion, imports an element of romance and poetry

into the prose of life, and compels us to rank the theatre as the most popular intellectual pleasure of the period.

Considerations of space have made it impossible to include in this volume many admirable actors whose talent would have assured them a place in any such work had it not been deemed advisable to select subjects not only for their ability, but as representing distinct schools of acting; and a supplementary volume is in preparation, in which many players now unavoidably omitted will be represented.

My cordial thanks are due to Mr. Alfred Gibbons for his kind permission to reproduce a number of the admirable character-sketches which originally appeared in the pages of the "Lady's Pictorial;" to Mr. W. J. Ingram for similar permission in regard to the illustration by Mr. Bernard Partridge of Mr. Henry Irving as "Mephistopheles," which originally appeared in the "Illustrated London News;" and to Mr. Henry Irving for permission to reproduce certain illustrations from the Lyceum Souvenirs of "Macbeth" and "The Dead Heart."

ARTHUR GODDARD.

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PLAYERS OF THE PERIOD.

HENRY IRVING.

THERE was once an ugly duckling, and many of the other ducklings, and of the ducks too, for that matter, except just a few who saw a little further than the end of their bills, were disposed to jeer at it, because it declined to turn its toes out like a conventional, well-brought-up duck. And some critical turkey-cocks, invested with spurs, and therefore thinking themselves emperors, blew themselves out like ships in full sail and bore straight down upon it, gobbled, and grew quite red in the face. But, despite many troubles, the ugly duckling, braving the quackings and the peckings, took the water and saw its own image, only to find itself—a swan. And after a time he heard them all saying that he was

the most beautiful of all the birds. Even the turkey-cocks moderated their rancour, and the sun of popular favour shone warm and bright. And the name of the ugly duckling was Henry Irving.

Thirty years ago just one or two shrewd readers of men, such as Charles Dickens—who had been much impressed by Mr. Irving's acting in *Uncle Dick's Darling*, remarking, "That young man will be a great actor"—and Adelaide Kemble, recognised the coming actor in the fluttering, frightened *débutant*, who, on his first appearance on the stage of the New Royal Lyceum Theatre, Sunderland, on September 29th, 1856, when the play was *Richelieu*, and the young actor had to utter the first words spoken in the play, "Here's to our enterprise!" was a dire failure; and on his second, as Cleomenes in *A Winter's Tale*, incontinently took to his heels, covering his retreat with a gasping, incoherent adjuration to his fellow-actors to "come on to the market-place." Yet, in this timid, stage-frightened Cleomenes was to be found, in the fulness of time, the populariser of Shakespeare, the bril-

liant and scholarly exponent of Shakespearean creations, the most intellectually and æsthetically satisfying Hamlet, Shylock, Benedick, of the modern stage ; a Romeo who should be a veritable type of the triumph of mind over body ; a Macbeth who, while original and occasionally antipathetic, should yet compel respect as a thoughtful and scholarly psychological study.

That Mr. Irving's *début* in the North should have not been an instantaneous triumph is not surprising when the taste of local audiences at that period is taken into account. Even as recently as 1880 an action was brought against a manager at Barnsley, to restrict him from producing a drama which excited the enthusiasm of the audience to such a pitch that it became a nuisance, the play in question being *The Six Stages of Crime ; or, Wine, Women, Gambling, Theft, Murder, and the Gallows*,—an additional attraction being the son of Charles Peace, the burglar-murderer, who played the concertina and answered any questions put to him by the audience.

The record of an actor who has appeared in more than six hundred and fifty parts is

terrifying to a conscientious chronicler, and compels an eclecticism that under other conditions might seem unreasonably narrow. But the only possible method of dealing with such a career with the hope of giving a just idea of the artistic nature and capacity of the actor, is to indicate the impersonations in which he has achieved the greatest distinction, and which have also served to illustrate most lucidly the opulence of his resources.

An actor who has succeeded in satisfying a cultured and critical section of the playgoing public in characters so numerous and diverse that nothing less than an Irving Encyclopædia could deal exhaustively with his *répertoire*, is a living negation of Got's cynical axiom that a great actor should have no brains beyond those essential to a mere mimic. He offers, also, in his own person, an argument in qualified support of Diderot's theory that an actor should have no sensibility. For it is clear that while Mr. Irving has won and kept his position by sheer brain-power, it is impossible that he can have felt in his own person all the storm and stress of passion, all the heartbreaking

pathos, all the brain-sucking cynicism of the dramatic characters which he has represented, except within the limits which he himself has assigned, namely, that it is quite possible for an actor who has mastered his art to feel all the excitement of the situation and yet be perfectly self-possessed. Otherwise he must have been, long ere this, a wreck of over-wrought nerves, a hopeless hypochondriac, a melancholy ghost of manhood, instead of the brilliant, tactful, astute informing spirit of the Lyceum.

Upon this point there is something to be said for Mr. Oscar Wilde's theory: "We must go to Art for everything, because Art does not hurt us. The tears that we shed at a play are a type of the exquisite sterile emotions that it is the function of Art to awaken in us. We weep, but we are not wounded. We grieve, but our grief is not bitter. In the actual life of man, sorrow, as Spinoza says somewhere, is a passage to a lesser perfection, but the sorrow with which Art fills us both purifies and initiates. . . . Emotion for the sake of emotion is the aim of Art, and emotion for the sake of action is the aim of life."

Mr. Irving occupies a position in the social history of his period that is unique. He is not simply a great actor. There are even to-day those who deny him any claim to histrionic greatness, as they consider that his "mannerisms" handicap him too severely—as if every really strong man, whether in the dramatic or any of its sister arts, did not prove his strength by individuality of style, or, as the unbelievers prefer to dub it, "mannerism." But he is more than a celebrated actor. He is a distinguished figure in the social life of to-day, and, more than that, he is a living influence.

Henry Irving is the David of the drama. After the disappearance from the stage of Macready, in 1851, with the honourable exceptions of the efforts of Charles Kean at the Princess's Theatre and Samuel Phelps at the remote and therefore comparatively uninfluential Sadler's Wells, the stage had lapsed into a lamentably commonplace and conventional—not to say comatose—condition, varied with occasional visitations of nightmare. The Goliath of Philistinism strutted in self-satisfied complacency until this dramatic David came

from his provincial wanderings, and slew the Philistine with the smooth stone of polished, intellectual art.

With the advent of Irving, culture killed conventionality and claptrap; intellectual distinction triumphed over commonplace dulness and brain proved its superiority alike to the banality of burlesque, the soulless splendour of spectacle, and the mania and mouthings of melodrama. Moreover, as regards the actor himself, the subtle chemistry of intellect has transmuted "mannerism" into personal distinction, and metamorphosed potential weakness into added strength.

Mr. Irving's artistic feeling is innate, and displays itself as unmistakably in his private life as upon the stage. His chambers in Grafton Street, so grim externally, and his house at Hammersmith, are full of quaint and interesting things,—beautiful old engravings of great actors of the past, curiously carved old cabinets, sketches of the actor himself in character, cabinets crowded with curious relics of dead-and-gone players—rings, "properties" of all sorts, and a host of interesting souvenirs

which Mr. Irving's admirers have taken occasion to present to him from time to time; books everywhere, on shelves, tables, chairs, the floor—an unfailing token of the great actor's student-nature, and many of them of great rarity and value; statuettes of Mephistopheles and Don Quixote, with charming Miss Ellen Terry as a foil to their grim picturesqueness; pictures of every kind, and each with some special charm of its own; dogs, including the prime favourite "Fussie;" and a thousand-and-one pleasant and graceful indications of the refined, artistic nature of the foremost player of the period.

Nor is the great actor himself less picturesque and delightful. The pink of courtesy and the prince of hosts, his high-bred manner and rich voice, his strongly-marked features, so full of character, and illumined by "twin stars, which nature has stuck in his head," as Colman said of Garrick, make up a personality full of charm and fascination.

Success has not spoiled Mr. Irving. He is to-day as unaffected, cordial, kindly, and hard-working as he was in the long-past period

when "plain living" was the necessity, and "high thinking" the rule, of his life ; and he is to the full as popular as a man as he is as an actor. His heart is ever sympathetic, his ear ever willing to listen to the voice of the timid or the suffering, his head and hand ever ready to counsel and to aid.

It is an interesting speculation whether in the midst of his histrionic triumphs Mr. Irving's thoughts ever revert to that memorable morning when, leaving his humdrum duties in the quiet back office of Messrs. Thacker & Co., in Newgate Street, where for about three years the embryo tragedian had carried out with conscientious care the work of an invoice clerk, he paid a visit to Phelps at Crosby Hall, in Bishopsgate Street, and, encouraged by the great actor's opinion of his single recitation, took the step which proved the turning-point in his life, returned to his office, and then and there "gave notice" to his employers, and announced his intention of adopting the stage as a profession.

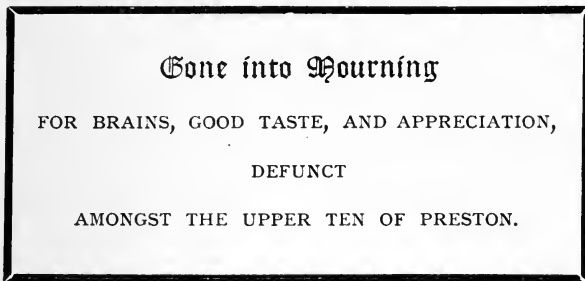
There are members of the staff of the well-known firm in Newgate Street who still retain

pleasant memories of the gentlemanly and amiable young Henry Brodribb, who came to their office from school, displayed so much assiduity and care in his work, and was so keenly alive to the refinements of life as to institute among the clerks who shared his desk a little code of rules, by which each agreed to be subject to a small fine for any lapse from the niceties of grammar or any of the proprieties of speech.

From the first the young fellow was fond of poetry and of reciting, yet, had not the artistic temperament been so strong within him, the world of art would probably have never known a Henry Irving, but the world of commerce might have been the richer to-day by an Anglo-Indian Henry Brodribb, sedate, methodical, porsy perhaps, and liverless. That instead of this estimable but possibly rather prosaic person we have the brilliant actor-manager of the Lyceum, is a curious example of the truth of the axiom, "Talent does what it can : Genius does what it must !"

It is not so many years since Watkins Burroughs, disgusted at the indifference of

his patrons to the merits of the legitimate drama, festooned the doors of the Preston Theatre with crape, and painted over them the inscription :—



Mr. Irving has done more than any other living actor to render a repetition of any such practical satire impossible, although there are still slow-witted people who can no more appreciate his delicate art than George II. could that of Garrick, of whom it is on record that, after seeing the great little actor in *Richard III.*, all that impressed the royal mind was the Lord Mayor; and Garrick, thirsting for criticism of Richard, was fain to content himself with the King's rhapsodical ejaculations: "I do love dat Lord Mayor. Capital Lord Mayor! Fine Lord Mayor, dat, Mr. Garrick; where you get such capital Lord Mayor?"

The provincial experience of Mr. Irving, naturally more or less of a probationary and educational phase in his career, may be dismissed with the truism that to the hard work and varied impersonations which it entailed London owes the present institution of the Lyceum Theatre. As Mr. Irving himself says, "The lucky actor works;" and it is, without question, to incessant, conscientious work, in the study and on the stage, that he owes, to a great extent, the position which he now enjoys.

But still more do we owe the Lyceum drama of to-day to the actor-manager's worthy conception of the responsibilities and potentialities of the stage and of the actor's calling. Mr. Irving has said with truth: "To the thoughtful and reading man the stage brings the life, the fire, the colour, the vivid instinct which are beyond the reach of study. To the common, indifferent man, immersed as a rule in the business and socialities of daily life, it brings visions of glory and adventure, of emotion and of broad human interest. . . . To the most torpid and unobservant it exhibits the humorous in life, and the sparkle and *finesse* of language,

which in dull ordinary existence are shut out of knowledge or omitted from particular notice. To all it uncurtains a world, not that in which they live, and yet not other than it—a world in which interest is heightened, and yet the conditions of truth are observed ; in which the capabilities of men and women are seen developed without losing their consistency to nature, and developed with a curious fidelity to simple and universal instincts of clear right and wrong.”

Upon another occasion, and referring more particularly to the functions of the individual actor, Mr. Irving said : “ Acting, like every other art, has a mechanism. No painter, however great his imaginative power, can succeed in pure ignorance of the technicalities of his art ; and no actor can make much progress till he has mastered a certain mechanism which is within the scope of patient intelligence. Beyond that is the sphere in which a magnetic personality exercises a power of sympathy which is irresistible and indefinable. That is great acting ; but though it is inborn, and cannot be taught, it can be brought forth only

when the actor is master of the methods of his craft." Upon these two maxims, it may be said, hang all the laws of the higher drama.

And how has Mr. Irving translated his precepts into practice; crystallised his theories into actualities? To form a just estimate of this it is necessary to ignore to some extent the second stage of his professional evolution, when he was acting under the Bateman management—at all events until his insistence upon the dramatic possibilities of *The Bells*, which made the Bateman management successful, and gave him his first untrammelled opportunity of making a mark with metropolitan audiences—judging him rather by what he has done under the favourable, if onerous, conditions of being answerable only to himself and the public, and free to carry out in their integrity and to their ultimate power his individual theories and principles.

Of a truth Mr. Irving has not at any period let his critics languish for lack of material. The mere repetition of his principal impersonations is like the Homeric catalogue of ships. From the refined comedy of Benedick to the

brutal blackguardism of Bill Sikes ; from the pure, gentle, ideal spirituality and sweet humanity of the Vicar of Wakefield to the diabolical, mocking cynicism of Mephistopheles ; from the dignity of Charles I. and the curiously pathetic passion of Shylock to the flippant rascality of Jingle and the airy insolence of Digby Grant ; from the haunting terror of Mathias and the conscience-stricken misery of Eugene Aram to the subtle treachery of Iago and the airy comedy of Doricourt ; from the vulpine cunning of Louis XI. and the wittier brilliancy of Richelieu to the vivid contrast of a Dubosc and Lesurques, the devil-may-care knavery of a Robert Macaire and the pathos and nobility of a Robert Landry, are huge physical and psychical chasms for the genius of one actor to bridge. It would also be unjust to deny that, despite the fact that the marked individualities of Mr. Irving's physique and method necessarily make each of these impersonations to a certain extent a variation of himself, yet each possesses a distinct identity, and, for the time at least, entirely satisfies the intellectual appetite of the audience.

Mr. Irving has upon three occasions had the honour of delivering an address by special invitation before the authorities and undergraduates, professors and students, of three Universities. The first occasion was on November 29th, 1876, when he was honoured by an address delivered to him, in the Dining Hall of Trinity College, Dublin, by the graduates and undergraduates, in the presence of the highest officers of the University, the address being read by the Member of Parliament for the University. On March 30th, 1885, at the invitation of the professors and students of Harvard University, Cambridge, U.S.A., Mr. Irving delivered a lecture on "Dramatic Art" at Sander's Theatre, Boston, before a crowded and enthusiastic audience, many members of which had come specially from New York. Mr. Irving gave then an eloquent exposition of his well-loved art, and combated the prejudicial impression many hold of a player's calling because he represents only feigned emotions, by pointing out that "this would apply with equal force to poet and novelist." After the address, President Eliot gave a reception to Mr. Irving, at which nearly

all the Professors of Harvard University and the notables present in the theatre attended. The third occasion was on June 26th, 1886, at Oxford, when Mr. Irving delivered an address on "Four Great Actors," before the heads of the Colleges and a remarkable gathering of distinguished scholars.

It was in 1859, at the Princess's Theatre, that Mr. Irving made his first appearance upon the London stage, but, with sound discretion, failing to see an opportunity of substantial advancement, he relinquished his engagement, returned to the provinces, and only came back to the metropolis after some years of further apprenticeship, to take leading parts at the St. James's Theatre, under the management of Miss Herbert, where he appeared, on October 6th, 1866, as Doricourt, in *The Belle's Stratagem*, and at once proved himself a master of light and polished comedy.

Then followed a medley of impersonations including a revival of Rawdon Scudamore in *Hunted Down*, a character which Mr. Irving had created with striking success in the provinces; Harry Dornton in *The Road to Ruin*;

both Joseph and Charles Surface in *The School for Scandal*; Robert Macaire, Petruchio, Bob Gassit in *Dearer than Life*; a realistic Bill Sikes, a creation of genuine power and originality; Young Marlow in *She Stoops to Conquer*; John Peerybingle in *Dot*, in which Mr. Irving showed that he could depict homely pathos as effectively as the nonchalant gaiety of light comedy or the power and depth of tragedy; Reginald Chevenix in *Uncle Dick's Darling*; Digby Grant in *The Two Roses*, a finished study of gentlemanly rascaldom, full of originality and polished to the last degree; an admirably impudent Jingle in *Pickwick*—the oddest prelude conceivable to the creation which stimulated the fortunes of the Bateman management at the Lyceum, and compelled all the town to flock to see the newly-revealed dramatic comet which was glowing luridly in the weird, fantastic, thrilling character of Mathias in *The Bells*, that powerful melodrama, in which, like Single Speech Hamilton, poor one-play Leopold Lewis apparently exhausted his dramatic resources.

And here it may not be out of place to

correct a misapprehension which was, at all events at one time, prevalent, to the effect that while *The Bells* made Mr. Irving, he neglected to help poor Lewis in the days of his decline. Mr. Irving scrupulously regarded the *amour-propre* of the broken-down playwright, and did not parade his benevolence, but as a matter of common justice it should be recorded that Leopold Lewis received countless kindnesses from Mr. Irving in the troubles sequent to an unfortunate career, and, during the last years of his life, received a regular income from the actor.

It is not altogether surprising that there was a time when a section of the critical wisdom of the day could find no more fitting badge for Mr. Irving than that of a light-character-eccentric-comedian. He was still, to it, the ugly duckling. It could not quite understand him and his originality, in which it only saw an exaggeration of character-acting, while his marked individuality appeared mere wanton, purposeless eccentricity. Instead of welcoming the advent of an actor who aimed above all else at fidelity of representation, and this in the face of so strongly-marked a physique as

to make versatility doubly difficult, the critics of this particular school seemed as if they would have welcomed a return to the classic but constrictive use of masks, rather than that their ideal of a particular character should not be rigidly maintained.

With true artistic insight, Mr. Irving recognised in *The Bells*, rejected though it had been with contumely and cynical amusement by many a managerial wiseacre, his opportunity. Not without hesitation, not without protest, was the play produced. Disaster was predicted with cheerful confidence, and the judicious grieved over what was considered a foregone failure. But what was the result? The vivid realism, the apparent spontaneity, the grim picturesqueness, and, above all, the obvious truth to nature of the Mathias compelled attention, insisted upon serious criticism, even when they did not command the unqualified admiration of those who refused to hear the voice of this new and uncanny charmer.

Never has Mr. Irving's own theory as to the power of an actor who combines the magnetic

force of a strong personality with a mastery of the resources of his art been more amply justified. Never, too, has he more plainly illustrated Diderot's paradox than in his creation of the haunted, conscience-stricken burgo-master, for, of a surety, the agony of the terror-stricken Mathias, the struggles of the dual nature—the eternal Ormuzd and Ahriman of humanity—could only be realised by the vivid imagination of an artist; and the secret of their hold upon the audience was to be found in their direct appeal to fundamental emotions, common to all ages, climes, and classes, made by an actor who was all the while a perfect master of his methods. As Mr. Irving has himself said: "Every jealous man does not utter laments as pathetic and eloquent as Othello's, but these are none the less human because they are couched in splendid diction. They move the hearer because they are the utterance of a man's agony. . . . The whole soul of an actor may be engaged in Hamlet's revenge upon Claudius, but he need not on that account feel any desire to slay the excellent gentleman who enacts the King."

No doubt for a while the sheer horror of the new Lyceum drama drew the public with all the primitive and powerful fascination of crime. The awful death of Mathias, the enthralling dream scene, the romantic realism of the whole thing, gripped the imagination even of the slowest-witted, much as if some ghastly crime had been enacted in their midst and was being served up to them with *sauce figuante* by the skilled special correspondents of an enterprising Press. But this *succès de l'horreur*, morbid and undesirable, soon gave place to an honest appreciation of the combined force and *finesse* with which a great actor could lift a part from its melodramatic low-level origin into the healthier air of tragedy, in which the passions of the audience might be stirred, not unworthily.

The courage of Mr. Irving in choosing this play was all the more remarkable as a different version of *Le Juif Polonais* had been produced at another theatre with anything but success. But in the hands of Mr. Irving the easily vulgarised figure of Mathias became a finished study profoundly true and thought-compelling,

exhibiting human nature under conditions as exceptional as they were, in their own way, fascinating. Intensity and intelligence made the English version of MM. Erckmann-Chatrion's *étude-dramatique* a truly absorbing study, instead of merely an appalling and repellent story of a crime and its punishment; and, on the morning of November 26th, 1871, Mr. Irving awoke, in Byronic fashion, to find himself famous.

It was not long before society split into two camps—the Irving-idolaters, and the Anti-Irvingites. The individualities of the actor in gait and pronunciation were stigmatised as ineradicable blots or hailed as affording a new and higher criterion of histrionic excellence; and, as the “mannerisms” of the French dramatist Marivaux necessitated the coining of a new word, *marivaudage*, so the cult of the new dramatic star soon gave us Irvingese, Irvingmania, and Irvingphobia, and Henry Irving became a universal dinner-table topic, as indispensable as the weather, and far more interesting. For this alone Mr. Irving deserves well of his age, for while amusing

subjects are not always interesting, and interesting subjects rarely amusing, he and his art are many-sided enough to be both. It would not be easy to mention any person and place the sudden blotting out of whom or which would make so lamentable a gap in the social life of to-day as Mr. Irving and the Lyceum Theatre.

From the morbid, monomaniacal Mathias Mr. Irving passed at a bound to the other extreme of his art, and appeared on April 1st, 1872, as Jeremy Diddler in the old-fashioned farce, *Raising the Wind*. But this was only an instance of *reculer pour mieux sauter*, and his next essay proved to be one of his finest creations, namely, that of Charles I. in Mr. W. G. Wills's poetical drama of that name.

It was on September 28th of the same year that Mr. Irving gave to the stage his dignified and touching picture of the White King—a work of rare beauty, softened by countless tender touches, invested with royal dignity, and illumined by an innate spirituality which seemed to surround the picturesque personality of the King with the sanctity of martyrdom.

The ascetic features of the actor, humanised and made gentle by the soft dark eyes and the tender smile, and with an intellectual beauty to



MR. HENRY IRVING AS CHARLES I.

many people far more fascinating than the comely curves, pink and white perfection, and sleek shapeliness of the stage Adonis, harmonised well with the dramatist's conception of

the First Charles ; and the picturesque dress, a faithful copy of Van Dyck, with the calmly regal bearing, combined to make one of the most finished and refined stage pictures of the period. The unstudied grace of gesture, the high-bred inflections of the voice,—all were admirable, and those who have witnessed the magnificent moment when the King, flinging back his cloak with a superb gesture, half of contempt, half of simple confidence in “the divinity that doth hedge a king,” held his breast at the mercy of the rebels’ pikes ; or that final scene upon the threshold of the scaffold, when women sobbed and men were strangely moved as the pathos culminated in the King’s farewell to his wife and little children, will not easily forget the Charles I. of Henry Irving.

That the melancholy beauty of the latest stage-version of Charles was intensified at the expense of Cromwell, who was painted with an unsparing brush as a human monster unfamiliar to the more judicial pages of the historian, does not alter the fact that Mr. Irving’s creation was one of exceptional dignity ; and its conscientious

elaboration proved that he was uttering no idle words when he expressed the opinion that to have an ideal in art, and to strive through one's life to embody it, may be a passion to the actor as it may be to the poet.

But the day of absolute realisation of his ideals was not yet come to the now celebrated actor. That was to be when, swaying a dual sceptre Mr. Irving should lord it at the Lyceum six years later as actor-manager. But how full of excellent work those six years of the Bateman management were! Creation followed creation, success succeeded success.

In April 1873 Mr. Wills provided Mr. Irving with a part absolutely opposed at all points to that of Charles, yet one which was peculiarly adapted to the actor's physique and to his methods as manifested in Mathias. As Eugene Aram, another study in the psychology of crime was made by Mr. Irving, and, with all the intensity of his mental power, he gave the world a representation of terror, remorse, bravado, and despair which will not be soon forgotten, evanescent as the greatest triumphs and most moving effects of an actor's art must

inevitably be. The defiance of the vulgar Houseman, the agony in the churchyard, the moment when with true artistic instinct Aram falls at the foot of a cross in the dumb misery of despair, the final confession and death, were details which stamped the impersonation as more than merely clever; and the play-going public looked forward with exceptional interest to Mr. Irving's creation of Richelieu in Lord Lytton's drama of that name, which was announced for September 27th, 1873.

Here, too, a complete triumph awaited the actor. To this day there are not wanting those who consider that the wily, worldly old Cardinal was, and is, the best of Mr. Irving's many impersonations. But this opinion was not universal, and there were those who found Richelieu disappointing, complaining that for three acts he was spiritless, and in the fourth delirious. Delirious or no, the audience accepted with instinctive justice, and without a dissentient voice, Mr. Irving's impersonation as a vivid, intellectual presentment of an exceptionally interesting figure.

Here again Mr. Irving's make-up was fault-



MR. IRVING AS HAMLET.



less, his picturesqueness unmarred by a single inconsistency, his bearing perfect in its versatility. Sarcasm and philosophy, fierce priestly denunciation—as when he all at once clothes himself in the sacerdotal dignity of a prince of the Church, and threatens the sacrilegious servants of the King with the awful curse of Rome—all seemed to spring spontaneously from Richelieu's lips; and thus to make the key-note of the drama tragic is surely a higher interpretation than that of Macready, who presented the Cardinal as something very like a comic character in the earlier scenes of the play. After Mr. Irving's Richelieu it would be as reasonable to expect an intelligent public to accept the old-time reading of Shylock, as a comic part, to be played by the low-comedian of the company in a red wig.

The dramatic version of Balzac's romantic story of the bricked-up lover, written by Mr. Hamilton Aidé under the title of *Philip* and produced on the stage of the Lyceum on February 7th, 1874, gave Mr. Irving one more opportunity of depicting the misery of remorse, accentuated this time by the addition of jealousy.

Philip is a sombre young Spaniard, the victim of remorse for the supposed murder of his half-brother, and consumed with jealousy of his wife. It can easily be imagined what Mr. Irving would make of these two powerful passions, and his Philip was a distinctly interesting study, despite many improbabilities in the circumstances by which he was conditioned.

After an intervening revival of *The Bells*, intense interest centred in the Lyceum again in October, on the 31st of which month Mr. Irving appeared as Hamlet.

There have been so many Hamlets, good, bad, and indifferent, that it might almost have been supposed that even an impersonation by so interesting an actor as Mr. Irving might excite but a languid and conventionally courteous show of interest, and secure nothing more satisfactory than a *succès d'estime*. But to English audiences there seems to be a perennial charm about this wonderful play, and it obviously possesses a peculiar fascination for actors.

It was objected by some sticklers for consistency that Mr. Irving was too old to play the Prince of Denmark with effect, as he could

not look the part. Others thought that his "mannerisms" would render anything but a caricature of Hamlet impossible—as though "mannerisms," or a powerful personality, were not inseparable from great acting. As an old dramatist once said: "No man has ever been a popular favourite in my time unless he was a pronounced mannerist. Charles Kemble was a silver-toned, sententious mannerist; Edmund Kean was a stuttering, spasmodic mannerist; Macready and Phelps always grim and growling over their bones; Charles Kean had a chronic cold in the head; Keeley was sleek and sleepy; Buckstone a chuckler; Compton funny as a funeral; Ben Webster always imperfect, and had a Somersetshire dialect; Mathews a Mephisto in kid gloves and patent leather boots; Ryder a roarer,"—and it is an open question whether the so-called "mannerisms" of Henry Irving have not helped rather than hindered his popularity, even if now and then they have obtruded themselves out of season to the detriment, in some degree, of his art.

But mannerisms or no mannerisms, Hamlet was a success. Thoughtful to the minutest

detail, distinguished, refined, picturesque, intelligent and intelligible, the new Hamlet made his mark from the first moment of his effective entrance, and the interest grew as the play progressed. It is a moot point whether Mr. Irving is the more successful when he appeals to the heads or to the hearts of his audience. Upon either theory his complete success as Hamlet can be understood. Unconventional, original, as in many respects it was, Mr. Irving's Hamlet bore in every tone, gesture, and glance the amplest evidence of earnest study. The assumed madness, the mingled pity and horror of his mother, the marvellous by-play in the great play-scene, the deliberate, novel, and natural method of the soliloquies, the abandonment of certain stage traditions and the courageous setting of new precedents, all went to prove that the complex nature and conflicting surroundings of the ill-starred Prince had been the subject of close and zestful study upon the part of the actor. The impersonation was an intellectual treat throughout, and at one or two great moments it stirred the emotions also into activity, and it was felt that in Mr. Irving we

had as complete and satisfactory a representative of the Danish Prince as even the most *exigéant* critic, the most bigoted and confirmed *laudator temporis acti*, could desire; and the play ran for two hundred representations—the longest run of *Hamlet* on record.

It was during the run of *Hamlet* that a very amusing *contretemps* was avoided by a hair's breadth of good luck. His Excellency the Chinese Ambassador and his attendant, petticoated, pig-tailed, and with the little round button at the top, like the Great Panjandrum, had been "behind the scenes." Upon making their way out from the dim regions they mistook the route, and it was only by the merest accident that they did not suddenly appear on the stage at the most critical moment of the play-scene, when their apparition would probably have "frighted" the King even more than the "false fires" of the players hired by Hamlet; while the effect upon the audience would have been one of those things that can be "better imagined than described."

On June 29th, 1875, *Hamlet* came to an end, to be superseded by *Macbeth* on September 18th,

a revival to the full as interesting, as conscientious, as artistically complete, as its predecessor; but which did not, so far as the assumption of the title *rôle* by Mr. Irving, give general satisfaction. The actor was intense as ever, his conception of the ambitious, vacillating Thane was both unconventional and consistent, and there were great moments in the impersonation. But the infirmity of purpose which other actors, with the exception of Edmund Kean, have slurred over, was perhaps insisted upon a little too obtrusively, and without doubt Mr. Irving's peculiarities of gait and elocution were more noticeable than usual; and as these are red rags to a certain class of playgoers, the "occasion to blaspheme" was not wasted upon the enemy. Yet the actor's infinite resources in the way of inventing "business" stood him in good stead, and it was generally admitted that his by-play and facial expressiveness were as mutely eloquent as ever, and that while the conception of the new Macbeth might not be altogether satisfying, the presentment of human passions was lucid and subtle as in other of the actor's creations.

The metamorphosis of Macbeth from a not ignobly ambitious or naturally craven man, by the fascination and spell of superstitious belief in a prophecy which jumped with his own ambition, was finely indicated; so, too, were the remorse, the pitiful terror, the struggle between the higher and lower nature of the man, all the outcome of supernatural influence, acting upon a weak rather than a wicked nature, in a superstitious age—the impersonation proving an interesting, if not an absolutely great, performance.

Then came *Othello*, in February 1876, and again opposing critical forces met and clashed with noisy vigour. Again Mr. Irving had forsaken tradition in costume and in conception of the part; and although there were many touches of the master-hand patent from time to time, the impersonation cannot rank amongst the great successes of the courageous actor. There was undoubtedly an occasional tendency in Mr. Irving's Moor to hysteria, and sometimes a lapse into lachrymosity, which equally robbed *Othello* of the dignity which is an integral part of his character, read simply by

the light of the Shakespearean text. Inevitably the Anti-Irvingites seized with avidity upon the chance to "batten on this Moor," and would, no doubt, have gladly consumed him utterly. But, despite frantic gesticulation and incoherent unintelligibility, despite the whirlwind of passion and the occasionally lugubrious sentimentality and excessive uxoriousness, the indications of dawning jealousy, the sensitive delicacy and self-condemnation with which Othello commissions Iago to set Emilia to spy upon Desdemona, and the sudden tragedy and irresistible pathos of his self-slaughter and death, dragging his dying body to the side of his victim's couch and there falling dead, compelled an admiration which might be withheld from the impersonation as a whole, as in Othello again those irrepressible "mannerisms" thrust themselves unduly to the front, to the delight of captious critics.

After *Othello* had run for some two months, Shakespeare was abandoned for a while, and the Poet Laureate's historical drama, *Queen Mary*, produced in elaborate and imposing fashion, Mr. Irving creating the part of Philip of Spain. In the adaptation and representation

of this drama and its hero for the stage there seemed to be a courtesy competition, a rivalry in relinquishment, between the author and the actor. The Laureate sacrificed personage after personage, scene after scene; and, not to be outdone in graceful renunciation, Mr. Irving stripped himself well-nigh bare of his mannerisms, exhibiting a self-control, a moderation, an absence of his usual restless energy, which not only befitted the cool callousness of the royal and heartless King, but revealed the actor in a new, subdued, and quietly-effective light. The cynical cruelty of his treatment of Mary—devoid of all humanity, mocking and merciless, was admirably conveyed, and, as an instance of polished brutality, Philip was a brilliant creation.

After a short and not too successful career, *Queen Mary* gave place to *The Bells* and *The Belle's Stratagem*, a return to melodrama, old comedy, and a Doricourt dressing-gown *de luxe*, which is said to have cost three and a half guineas a yard; to be followed, however, quickly, by a remarkably successful Shakespearean provincial tour, which was the prelude

to another Shakespearean revival at the Lyceum, in the shape of the inauguration of the season of 1877 by a production of *Richard III*.

Mr. Irving wisely discarded the mutilated, not to say irreverently tinkered, version of Colley Cibber, and reverted to the original text. His impersonation of the crouch-backed Duke of Gloucester proved to be instinct with intelligence—full of force and fire, the characteristics of the “unpopular King” being clearly marked, while anything like a vulgar exaggeration of his physical deformity was avoided. The cynical cruelty of Richard’s forecast of the death of the young princes, the passion of his love-scene with the Lady Anne, were artistic and finished to the last degree. In this new impersonation Mr. Irving fully atoned for any alleged shortcomings in *Macbeth* and *Othello*. Richard was well-nigh perfect. All the cynicism and subtlety of the man, as we feel that he must have been, were brought out boldly by the art of the actor, and the curiously interesting, if rather painful, study of a deformed, misshapen, malignant creature, glorying, in a sense, in his own moral and physical warping, was presented

with quite exceptional skill. The new Gloucester was a triumph of originality and independence, and was if anything too well furnished with the physiognomical expressiveness and ingenious by-play of which Mr. Irving is so complete a master ; but the extreme discretion of the actor in limiting the physical peculiarities of the character, and emphasising the ingenuity of Richard's dissimulation, and Mr. Irving's power of engrossing the imagination of an audience by cleverly conceived "business," were very conspicuous, notably when he studied the map of the battle-field in his tent, before the engagement, in absolute silence, yet without for a single moment losing grip of the complete attention of his audience.

As though in illustration of Diderot's "non-sensibility" theory, the next appearance of Mr. Irving was in the two rôles of Joseph Lesurques and Dubosc, in Charles Reade's adaptation of *Le Courier de Lyons*, produced at the Lyceum on May 19th, 1877. For one man to impersonate with convincing realism two such widely divergent characters in the same play was itself a proof of genius. The trans-

formation, in appearance, manner, voice, was most remarkable in the last act, when—after the brutal ruffian Dubosc, uncouth, passionate, hoarse, excited by drink, makes a savage attack upon Fouinard, and then lapses into delirious terror and violent anger with those who have betrayed him, and rushes, distorted and disfigured with rage and fear, behind the opening door—Lesurques enters a few seconds later, calm and self-possessed, the very type of unassuming, well-bred ease. All the passion and brutality of Dubosc were obliterated as though they had never been, and Mr. Irving's ability to convey the agony of a noble-minded man accused of a revolting crime, and hedged in by circumstantial evidence of a convincing kind, and the physical traits common to the two men, differing so utterly in nature, more than justified his following the lead of Charles Kean and taking part in an uncomfortably violent melodrama.

It was on March 9th, 1878, that Mr. Irving appeared for the first time as Louis XI. in Dion Boucicault's adaptation of Casimir Delavigne's drama, and simply took his

audience by storm by the brilliant intellectuality of his impersonation. The dramatist has played no courtier's part in dealing with this mean and shifty monarch. Yet there are rags and tatters of regality still clinging to the decrepit, toothless, crafty old King, and now and then they flutter feebly in defence of the right of Louis to a royal title. For the most part the character is despicable, treacherous, malignant, yet Mr. Irving never quite allows his audience to forget that Louis, with all his squalid crouching over the fire, his grim, toothless chuckling over mean triumphs, his malign ill-will, his saturnine humour, his senile incipient decay of body and mind, his doting superstition, his hobbling gait and fantastic mopping and mowing, is still a man, is still a King.

Conditioned by the physical limits of extreme old age, Mr. Irving runs the gamut of human emotions in this part, while the make-up of Louis is perfect—a very nightmare of repellent, malignant senility.

The grim comedy, too, of the scene with the peasants in the third act, and the ghastly

terror of the fourth, when the King, in a frenzy of passionate hate, fights the air in the belief that he is slaying the Duc de Nemours, lead up to the really marvellous death-scene in the fifth act—a masterpiece of painful realism, illustrating the utter collapse of physical strength and the pitiless approach of death with a fidelity that is positively appalling. In the opinion of many, Mr. Irving's Louis XI. remains the impersonation of all others most incontestably instinct with genius from first to last,—a quite remarkable effort, intellectually convincing and terrible in its unsparing truth.

This wonderful impersonation was followed by that of Vanderdecken on June 8th, in Messrs. W. G. Wills and Percy Fitzgerald's drama of that name ; but although the character was, in its way, weirdly impressive and admirably picturesque, it did not rank with Mr. Irving's most successful parts, and in the following month the drama was succeeded by *Pickwick*, in which, as Jingle, Mr. Irving again showed a positively ebullient humour.

December 30th, 1878, was a red-letter day in Mr. Irving's career, for on that date the

Lyceum was re-opened under his management—a fact which, while it imposed new obligations, new labours, new responsibilities, upon him, possessed the compensating advantage of giving him an absolutely free hand. Now, if at all, he might be expected to carry out his ideas to their perfect fruition, to prove that his apostrophe of the actor's calling was no mere vapouring affectation.

“How noble the privilege,” said Mr. Irving, speaking of the relations of actor and audience, “to work upon these finer—these finest—feelings of universal humanity! How engrossing the fascination of those thousands of steady eyes, and sound sympathies, and beating hearts which an actor confronts, with the confidence of friendship and co-operation, as he steps upon the stage to work out in action his long-pent comprehension of a noble masterpiece!” And now the time had come for the justification of this theory, the fulfilment of this excellent ideal. Fortified by the consciousness of a devoted following and many notable successes in the past, Mr. Irving entered upon his new *rôle* of actor-manager

with many points in his favour. His was now the opportunity of making the Lyceum a power—the shrine of culture, the triumph of art, the Mecca of the æsthetic, the intellectual, the intense. Their confidence he already possessed, and he promptly justified it further by the engagement of Miss Ellen Terry—his dramatic “affinity” if there be such a thing in art, and by the revival in splendid fashion of *Hamlet*. He had already proved that the Prince of Denmark, to use his own words, was “flesh and blood, and not a bundle of philosophies,” and as such had an unfailing hold upon human sympathies, and upon this memorable first night—anxious as he must have been, burdened with the responsibility of a divided duty in his dual capacity of manager and actor, Mr. Irving re-created the sad and thoughtful Hamlet with a brilliancy and individuality more remarkable than ever. Spurred by a demonstration of loyal attachment such as might have made even a less emotional man than Henry Irving glad and grateful, he excelled himself, and that initial performance of *Hamlet* under the new régime was of splendid augury.

proved the right of the actor to assume absolute control, and sent the audience away with bright anticipations, destined in due course to be realised to the full.

The season of 1879 was more remarkable for revivals than new productions, the only novelty in Mr. Irving's impersonations being Claude Melnotte in *The Lady of Lyons*, produced with mediocre success on April 26th. Mr. Irving is never seen at his best in the rôle of a ranting lover, and his Claude, though not without merit and a certain originality of treatment, need not be dwelt upon in the presence of so many assumptions of far more importance.

Somewhat to the dismay of his disciples, Mr. Irving, in his speech at the end of the season, threatened his audience with a revival of some old and effete dramas, such as *The Stranger*, *The Iron Chest*, and *The Gamester*; but happily this infliction was reduced to one only, *The Iron Chest*, produced without conspicuous success on September 27th,—Mr. Irving as Sir Edward Mortimer adding one more figure to his gallery of conscience-stricken criminals.

Following this came a production of *The Merchant of Venice* which proved that Shakespearean drama is never an anachronism, but a thing for all time. The new Shylock was a



MR. IRVING AS SHYLOCK.

brilliant impersonation, conceived in a nobler spirit than convention would have prompted, and carried out with characteristic consistency. Never before had Shylock been invested with so much dignity. Never before had he so

clearly embodied all the pathos of a conquered, down-trodden, despised, yet innately great people. Never before had racial characteristics been so strongly marked, yet kept so studiously within the boundary which divides character-acting from caricature. Never before had there been a Shylock for whom it was so easy to feel respect and sympathy. The conventional and vulgar notion of a contemptible Jew usurer, with no soul above his money-bags, no care—beyond the natural instinct of paternal affection—for aught but his ducats, was cast to the winds, and in its place we had a picturesque and pathetic figure, cherishing gold, it is true, but as a shield from Gentile contumely, a sole weapon of defence against powerful and pitiless persecutors ; and even the cruel clamouring for the “ pound of flesh ” lost something of its savagery, conditioned by the actor’s new conception of the character.

That Mr. Irving had given minute study to the part and to the play was evident by some bits of “ business ” not to be found in Shakespeare or in tradition, but which none the less aided the actor’s new reading of the part.

The noisy execration of the crowd outside the court, after Shylock's dignified exit, growing fainter by degrees, and the unexpected lifting of the curtain, showing the baffled Jew striding moodily to the home from which, all unknown to him, his daughter had fled, were innovations of genuine artistic value, emphasising the pathos of the new rendition, and compelling sympathy for the defeated, deserted, despairing man.

Whether a Pope of to-day would be disposed to say of Mr. Irving's impersonation as the keen little poet-critic said of Macklin's Shylock—"This is the Jew that Shakespeare drew"—is open to discussion; but it might reasonably be said of Mr. Irving, as of his great predecessor in the part, that he has given us emphatically "his own Jew."

The revival of *The Merchant of Venice*, sumptuous, colourful, satisfying alike to eye and brain, ran for no less than two hundred and fifty nights, and during the latter part of the period Mr. Irving appeared on the same nights as the lover, Count Tristan, in Mr. Wills's *Iolanthe*, a version of *King René's Daughter*, by Herz.

Always possessed, like most people of imaginative minds, by a *penchant* for the mysterious in nature, it was not surprising that the autumn season of 1880 should find Mr. Irving returning to melodramatic mysticism, and producing, on September 18th, Boucicault's version of *Les Frères Corses*. In *The Corsican Brothers*, as Fabien and Louis dei Franchi, Mr. Irving had a comparatively easy task. The picturesque and mysterious affinity of the twin brothers, the occult sympathy which is the keynote of the play, were well within the range of his art, and the romantic story, splendidly illustrated by a series of perfectly appointed stage pictures, and invested with peculiar interest by Mr. Irving's assumption of the sympathetic twins, proved popular, and titillated successfully that taste for the creepy and supernatural which is innate in the great majority. The thrilling tremolo of the time-honoured Ghost Melody, the masterly duel in the wood with Château Renaud, and the all-pervading air of supernaturalism, fascinated the town, and enabled Mr. Irving to congratulate himself upon yet one more success.

The new year was destined to see one of

the few new plays produced by Mr. Irving put upon the stage, and on January 3rd, 1881, the Laureate and the Lyceum actor-manager were again in conjunction. But again the two luminaries did not prove as brilliantly attractive as might have been expected. Yet Mr. Irving did all for the play that art and enterprise could suggest. The staging was superb, one scene, the interior of the Temple of Artemis, being almost oppressively solid and magnificent. All that music, incense, elaborate ritual, the mysterious flickerings of sacred fires, the ornate and imposing ceremonial of Pagan religious rites could do, was pressed into the service of the tragedy, but for all that *The Cup* was not an unqualified success. The diction of the work, like everything from the pen of Tennyson, was graceful, polished, faultily faultless; but the theme was unpleasant, unwholesome, and not new. The crime of Camma, in avenging the death of her husband by that of Synorix, has been dealt with on the stage more than once; and, moreover, the *motif* of the play does not lend itself consistently to the Laureate's daintiness of diction, the result being that the

speeches sometimes fail to convince—a fatal fault in work presented upon the stage.

As the libertine Synorix, enamoured to madness of the beautiful Priestess of Artemis, Mr. Irving was vigorous, realistic, consistent, and audacious. He left no doubt as to the nature of the sensual Pagan, nor as to the object and passion of his life. The barbarian is a picturesque semi-savage and a bold and effective study, but there is a lack of human sympathy, an absence of verisimilitude about the tragedy, for which no managerial lavishness or perfect actor-craft could atone, and *The Cup* proved likely to remain a play for the study rather than the stage.

On May 2nd, 1881, London playgoers experienced a somewhat exceptional pleasure in a revival of *Othello* at the Lyceum, with Mr. Irving and Mr. Booth playing Iago and the Moor on alternate nights, with Miss Ellen Terry as Desdemona.

Naturally, the Iago of so subtle a master of method and *finesse* as Mr. Irving was anticipated with lively interest, and the event justified the utmost expectations of his admirers. Malign,

merciless, yet veiling both qualities under an irresistible air of swaggering candour, the new Iago was daring, original, effective—fertile in fresh “business,” restlessly energetic, spirited and vigorous from first to last, and the novel revival proved a success in every sense of the word.

The summer season of 1881 was brought to a close with a representation of *The Hunchback*, with Mr. Irving as Modus, in which rôle he displayed a spirit of true comedy, and showed that if he could not play the sentimental lover to advantage he was able to invest the part of a more fanciful wooer with a charm of its own.

On Boxing-night, Mr. Irving revived *The Two Roses*, but although the humour of his impersonation of Digby Grant was riper than ever, the always thin plot and dialogue now proved too weak for popular taste, accustomed to dramatic strong meat ; and on March 11th, 1882, an elaborate revival of *Romeo and Juliet* took the stage at the Lyceum, and occupied it, despite much critical dissension, for a hundred and sixty representations.

The beautiful stage-pictures, the perfect stage-management, compelled admiration and commanded success. But the Romeo of Mr. Irving was not ideally excellent. Refined, thoughtful, picturesque, it was an admirable presentment of the graver, sterner side of the character, but the boyish exuberance of passion, the youthful inflammability of temperament, which are the notes of Romeo's nature in the earlier scenes, were sought almost in vain. In his despair, when the boyish, impulsive lover had been sharply urged by sorrow into manhood, Mr. Irving was excellent, and again his by-play and significance of look and gesture and movement were full of intelligence. But the revival is remembered rather as a managerial than a histrionic success.

But Mr. Irving had a lover of another kind in store, and with admirable discretion his next Shakespearean revival was of that happy comedy *Much Ado about Nothing*.

London playgoers were on the tiptoe of expectation as rumours of colossal preparations floated about town, and, while even unbelievers recognised the wisdom of Mr. Irving's latest

choice, his votaries anticipated, and rightly, that his Benedick would rank amongst his most consummately artistic impersonations.

And in truth the modern stage has seen



MR. IRVING AS BENEDICK.

nothing finer in pure high comedy than the Benedick of Mr. Irving. The production of *Much Ado about Nothing*, on October 11th, 1882, had been much canvassed, yet even Mr. Irving's most loyal admirers scarcely hoped for

such an unqualified triumph. But it was not surprising that the distinction, the perfect refinement and delicate humour, the high-bred courtesy and quick play of fancy of this delightful Shakespearean creation, should find satisfying realisation in the person of so refined and distinguished an actor. And curiously enough, that even the conquest of the cavillers might lack nothing, the actor's "mannerisms" almost absolutely disappeared. The carriage of this new Benedick was grace and courtliness incarnate; the witty verbal thrust and parry were delivered as clearly and intelligibly as the dullard on the one hand and the purist on the other could desire; the whimsical humour and play of fancy which make Benedick a figure for all time were never more fully brought out by an actor or more completely enjoyed by an audience; the creation of Shakespeare, refined, petulant, loyal, affectionate, embittered, but never malignant or mean, was embodied to perfection by Mr. Irving, whose Benedick must always remain one of the most picturesque and absolutely charming of his many impersonations.

In the inevitable speech on the first night of *Much Ado about Nothing* Mr. Irving said: "I am told sometimes that I do wrong to inflict on you the tediousness of Shakespeare—an author whose works some of the wise judges of dramatic art assure us are rather dull and tiresome to a nineteenth-century audience;" but his own inimitable acting made the three-centuries-old play as stirring and as pleasing as it ever could have been in its earliest days.

As a writer of *vers de société* said at the time:—

"And yet—and yet there are a few
 Poor fools who fondly cherish
 A hope that what is good and true
 Will somehow never perish;
 Who hold a stupid threadbare creed,
 That in our poet's pages
 There lies enough true life indeed
 To last through all the ages;—

"Who feel his magic to be such,
 That till the great Hereafter,
 All hearts shall own his gentle touch
 With weeping and with laughter;—
 Who know that while this world shall last,
 As long as words are spoken,
 His fame shall never be o'ercast,
 His kingly sway be broken."

And the success of the revival proved that, as Mr. Irving once said, "Shakespeare is as modern as any playwright of our time. The delightful humour of *Much Ado about Nothing* is as highly relished as the best comedy of our own life and manners."

To this most admirable production succeeded a number of revivals of pieces to be taken to America; and when the time of departure drew near, the whole artistic world of London exerted itself to speed the great actor on his voyage with every token of honour and goodwill. Latterly the farewell banquetting business has been carried by enthusiasts to ridiculous excess, but the great dinner given to Mr. Irving at St. James's Hall, on July 4th, 1883, was unique in stage history. Lord Chief Justice Coleridge presided, and a great crowd, brilliant in literature, the arts, and society, flocked to do honour to the great actor. Five hundred guests, almost without exception men of some distinction, sat down, and some two thousand five hundred applicants for tickets had to be refused. The demonstration was indeed remarkable, and the eloquent

speech of the Lord Chief Justice a brilliant tribute to Mr. Irving and his art.

In one clever passage Lord Coleridge summed up the secret of Mr. Irving's power. "It does not become me now," said the Lord Chief Justice, "to analyse critically Mr. Irving's genius, to weigh it in the balance of opinion, or to say that in this or in that it is deficient. To me it is sufficient to be sure that he has an extraordinary and unusual power of conveying the conception of the part which he acts, that he has the power of expressing to me and to others, and making us comprehend, what is in his own mind, and what is his own distinct intellectual conviction."

And in his modest and dignified reply, Mr. Irving seemed happily to hit upon his own secret of success when he said, speaking of actors who would elevate their art: "To effect this creditable purpose they must bring resolute energy and unfaltering labour to their work; they must be content to spurn delights and live laborious days; they must remember that whatever is excellent in art must spring from labour and endurance."

This tribute of the representatives of literature, learning, and the arts was followed by a great popular farewell demonstration within the walls of the Lyceum.

With equal courage and discretion Mr. Irving elected to appear that night in two totally dissimilar characters—to give a specimen of his excellent comedy as Doricourt, and of his tragic power as Aram. He was admirable in both, but the real event of the night was the farewell speech, when the audience cheered like people possessed, women did not disguise their emotion, and Mr. Irving himself was profoundly moved. In the face of such a scene the most cynical unbeliever in the stage, save as one of many methods *pour passer le temps*, could not but admit the influence for good or evil it might be in the hands of a “magnetic personality” capable of eliciting such emotion as Mr. Irving.

A short tour in the provinces followed the Lyceum farewell, and at a banquet in Edinburgh Mr. Irving made a clever speech, in which he said: “I am proud of being an actor, and I am proud of my art. It is an

art which never dies—whose end and aim is to hold the mirror up to nature, to give flesh and blood to the poet's conception, and to lay bare to an audience the heart and soul of the character which the actor may attempt to portray. It has been the habit of people to talk of Shakespearean interpretations as classics. We hear of classic this and classic that; and if classic is to be refined, and pure, and thoughtful, and natural, then let us be classic by all means; but if in the interpretation of Shakespeare to be classic is to be anything but natural, then the classic is to my thinking a most dangerous rock to strike upon; and as I would be natural in the representation of character, so I would be truthful in the mounting of plays. My object in this is to do all in my power to heighten, and not distract, the imagination—to produce a play in harmony with the poet's ideas, and to give all the picturesque effect that the poet's text will justify."

On October 11th the *Britannic* steamed away from Liverpool to New York, bearing thither Mr. Irving and Miss Terry, after a final "God-

speed," in which the very hearts of the people spoke, and which Mr. Irving received with bared and bowed head, touched beyond words.

The American tour, which commenced in New York on Monday, October 29th, 1883, and terminated in the same city on March 30th, 1884, was one round of triumphs, banquets, bouquets, wreaths, speeches, compliments, canvas-back ducks, good-will, good houses, and good cheer. The American interviewers were enraptured with so fertile a subject, the American critics almost unanimous in their praise; the American public generous and appreciative to a fault. A leading critic summed up the secret of the great actor's charm in a phrase, by asserting that he "speaks to the soul and the imagination," and the Americans promptly showed their desire to be credited with the possession of both these good things by crowding the theatres, and so, to the solid satisfaction of all concerned, proving that soulful and imaginative acting is a paying concern.

While Mr. Irving was playing in a town in the "Wild West," he experienced for the first and last time something like discourtesy from

the manager of the hotel at which he was stopping.

Mr. Irving had with him his pet dog, "Fussie," between whom and himself a strong affection exists. But the hotel manager was indisposed to accept a dog as a visitor in his establishment, and informed Mr. Irving with unnecessary *brusquerie* that "Fussie" must go.

Protest and expostulation proving wholly vain, Mr. Irving finally precipitated matters by saying calmly: "Very well, bring me my bill. If the dog goes, I go too." The manager then assured Mr. Irving that the dog should be well taken care of outside the hotel if he himself remained, but this did not meet with the actor's approval. He had no desire to leave, but at the same time he was determined not to part with his dog; and all at once an inspiration came to him, and in his coolest fashion he looked at the manager quietly and remarked: "No—that won't do. We'll go. *I* don't mind, but when the dog has gone *what will you do about the rats?*" Apologies, entreaties, humility of manager, slow yielding

of Mr. Irving, who remained in the hotel, and heard nothing more of the necessity of “boarding out” his faithful “Fussie.”

Mr. Irving made his re-appearance at the Lyceum after his first visit to America on the night of May 31st, 1884, as Benedick, in a revival of *Much Ado about Nothing*. The moment he appeared on the stage, the auditorium became the scene of the wildest enthusiasm. So vigorous and vociferous was the audience in its manifestations of cordial welcome and hearty goodwill, that for a time the progress of the play was interrupted. Mr. Irving rose to the occasion, and acted superbly in what is certainly one of the finest examples of high comedy which has been seen by the present generation of playgoers. And when upon the final fall of the curtain the usual clamorous demand for a speech was made, he delivered a quite admirable little oration, charmingly spoken, conspicuous for its good taste, and commendably free from cheap claptrap about the elevation of the drama and the art of acting, with which, he may have thought, theatrical audiences had been somewhat surfeited. The

occasion was a notable one in every way, and offered one more proof of Mr. Irving's popularity, and the irrefragable hold which he had taken upon the sympathies of the public.

On July 8th of the same year a small and ungracious minority saw fit to express a somewhat adverse opinion of the representation of *Twelfth Night*, as revived at the Lyceum by Mr. Irving. Such a discord in the usually harmonious tone of a Lyceum audience jarred unpleasantly upon the ear of *habitue's* of the theatre, and inspired Mr. Irving with some unusual comments upon the "strange element" that appeared to be present in the house. The expressions of dissatisfaction were certainly a breach of good taste, and a distinct injustice.

Never in living memory had a play been more magnificently staged; the scenery was exquisite, the dresses superb, the acting, as a rule, excellent. The play dragged, and was, in a degree, a disappointment, but the ironical calls for the "author" were not without significance in this respect, for *Twelfth Night* is not a good acting play. There is so little that is really dramatic in its situations, so little that

enlists the sympathy of an audience in the character or circumstances of the principal figures, and the humour is of such a decidedly old-world flavour, that the chances are that if the play were written by a modern dramatist it would go a-begging amongst the managers, and perhaps Mr. Irving showed more courage than discretion in putting upon the stage what he himself has called "one of Shakespeare's most difficult plays." He toned down



MR. IRVING AS MALVOLIO.

the coarseness and clipped the verbiage of the original text with judgment, but for all that the play did not win public favour.

Mr. Irving's Malvolio was quaint, fantastic, grimly humorous. Made up like a cross between

Shylock and Don Quixote—with thin grey hair, a Van Dyck tuft, and an emaciated, oddly-lined, and wrinkled visage, Malvolio, in his prim dress of black and old gold, was a fascinating figure ; and in the garden scene, where he is fooled to the top of his bent by Maria's letter purporting to declare her mistress's passion for the steward, Mr. Irving gave us one of the most whimsical bits of humour of the modern stage. The reading of the letter was an excellent piece of comedy, and in the famous cross-gartered scene with Olivia, Malvolio's smile was *impayable*. The scene in the dark room erred on the side of excessive prostration ; but in the final outburst, in which the "badly-used Malvolio" rushes from the stage with a threat of revenge, Mr. Irving invested the part with the dignity and passion of a man who feels that he has been grossly and unjustly outraged.

This, in many respects, notable and worthy production, was not, however, destined to hold the stage for long, and on August 23rd Mr. Irving frankly accepted the situation, and commenced with *The Bells* a series of brief revivals of some of his more famous and popular

productions, including *Louis XI.* and *Richelieu* and by this means succeeded in finishing the season with *éclat*. The limited success, save in an artistic sense, of *Twelfth Night* must have been somewhat disheartening to Mr. Irving, after the immense pains and expense to which he had gone in its production, but the truth is that Malvolio is a quaint and whimsical creation not to be quite so easily "understood of the people" as other Shakespearean rôles essayed by Mr. Irving with unqualified success. None the less it was appetising to the few, if "*caviare* to the general."

The Lyceum season of 1884 closed on August 28th, and never, perhaps, did Mr. Irving do himself or his subject more ample justice than on the night of his farewell. His *Richelieu* was a superb impersonation. No shade of the strangely complex nature was lost or slurred. We read as in an open book the character of the wily, yet brave; ambitious, yet tender; pitiless, yet just, disposition of the great Cardinal. Never, too, had the contrast between physical infirmity and mental vigour been more strongly or more subtly defined. There is

something infinitely pathetic in the grand wreck which Richelieu becomes in Mr. Irving's hands. We see the story of the loveless life as well as that of the soaring ambition in every gesture of the majestic old man, and the character-study is all the more interesting by reason of the marvellous transitions from the verge of despairing melancholy to the most quaintly cynical humour, or triumphant victory, almost hysterical in its ungovernable ecstasy, over his would-be assassins.

The farewell itself was again a scene to remember—a repetition of all the enthusiasm and affection which were so manifest upon the occasion of the last Lyceum performance prior to his first visit to America.

Mr. Irving's second American tour commenced in Quebec on September 30th, 1884, and terminated in New York on April 4th, 1885, the American public again giving the Lyceum company and their brilliant actor-manager the most cordial welcome.

In connection with this second visit to the States some remarkably free-spoken as well as flattering criticism was indulged in by the

American Press, and in December 1884 the *Philadelphia Record* published something of a curiosity in the way of dramatic criticism. Speaking of the general impression made by Mr. Irving in America, and the attitude adopted towards him, it remarked: "Enlisted as enthusiastic champions on his side is a goodly array of ox-eyed literary daisies, whose nauseating pollen is flung far and wide, stifling the public judgment even as Dalmatian powder chokes a cockroach. Very few of these encephalitic growths, however, project their looming mass upon the horizon of Philadelphia, and Mr. Irving has been generally judged and approved in this city with due regard to his merits and demerits as well." This was frank, and, in its own way, flattering; moreover it had the merit of possessing a distinct flavour of truth.

During the same tour, in the following April, an amusing incident occurred at the Star Theatre, New York, during a representation of *Twelfth Night*. It was when Malvolio, fooled to the uttermost, is being roasted by Sir Toby, Fabian, and Maria, and has to ask them, "Do you know what you say?" As fate would have it, Mr.

Irving put a distinct accent on the "you," and as the phrase was drily enunciated—"Do *you* know"—the audience gave noisy vent to their delight in a burst of laughter. Mr. Irving paused a moment, evidently a little embarrassed at making this unexpected point. Then he repeated it, to the provocation of another roar, and it was only in the wings that he learned that he had unwittingly parodied *The Private Secretary*.

Upon the departure of Mr. Irving from America an example of the enthusiasm which he evoked may be gathered from a short excerpt from a poetical address penned by the well-known critic, Mr. William Winter:—

"Now fades across the glimmering deep, now darkly drifts away
The royal monarch of our hearts, the glory of our day:
The pale stars shine, the night winds sigh, the sad sea makes
its moan,
And we, bereft, are standing here, in silence and alone.
Gone every shape of power and dread his magic touch could
paint;
Gone haunted Aram's spectral face and England's martyred
saint,
Gone Mathias of the frenzied soul, and Louis' sceptred guile,
The gentle head of poor Lesurques, and Hamlet's holy smile."

The delicate flattery of this is as exceptional

a tribute as even a "royal monarch" of the stage could desire or expect.

A notable instance of Mr. Irving's success as a diplomatist occurred upon the occasion of his return from America, in the spring of 1885. The night of Saturday, May 2nd, was trebly interesting. There was the question: Had Mr. Irving lost touch with the public during his prolonged absence? Then it was doubtful how far the innovation of booking seats in the pit and gallery would be approved; and, during Mr. Irving's absence, a new and notable Hamlet had appeared to invite comparison.

The reception awarded to Mr. Irving was cordial, affectionate; his performance refined, touching, full of subtlety and poetic feeling, always excellent, occasionally great; and the audience recognised this heartily. But when the curtain fell for the last time, and Mr. Irving made the usual "speech," the Old Pitites and the New Pitites grew vociferous. An unusual storm raged in the Lyceum, and Mr. Irving, whose bearing throughout was in admirable taste, very properly said that it was not the time to arrive at any definite decision. But the

storm still raged, until, by one of his flashes of genius, Mr. Irving turned the situation to his advantage by quoting *Hamlet* with a grace and charm which simply won the whole house, summing up the affair by saying, with inimitable courtesy of tone and bearing: "What so poor a man as Hamlet is may do, to express his love and friending to you, God willing, shall not lack."

It would be difficult to imagine and ungrateful to desire anything more exquisitely beautiful, though almost painfully pathetic, than the representation of Mr. W. G. Wills's play *Olivia*, as revived at the Lyceum on May 30th, 1885. *The Vicar of Wakefield*, Goldsmith's perfect and classic story of woman's love and trust sacrificed to man's passion and perfidy, has formed the *motif* of innumerable plays, poems, and pictures, so tempting is it to the artistic temperament. Mr. Wills kept closely to Goldsmith's story, but the simple, nervous, direct, and graceful diction was largely his own. There was no fine writing, no straining after effect—a touching simplicity and tender delicacy pervaded the whole work; the tone was consistent,

and the pathetic character of the play relieved by the only humour possible in such a theme—the gentle playfulness of the Vicar, whose humour is as softly lambent and as harmless as summer lightning, and the coy and simple loves of Moses and Polly. The story is so full of tender pathos that it would have been barbarous to have marred its tearful charm with bucolic witticisms or rustic buffoonery, and although the Lyceum version of *The Vicar of Wakefield* must be classed amongst the pleasures of melancholy, the pity and sympathy which it compelled prove the purity and beauty of the work.

Mr. Irving's Dr. Primrose was a delight. The Vicar proved as gentle, lovable an old man as Goldsmith's ideal. Full of simple dignity, invested with a rare charm of old-world grace and courtesy, and showing, when occasion demands, a sturdy manliness and righteous indignation, Dr. Primrose must ever rank amongst Mr. Irving's happiest impersonations. The almost idolatrous affection of the old Vicar for his beautiful and gentle daughter; his happiness in her love; his despair at her flight; his dignified rebuke of her betrayer; his passionate welcome

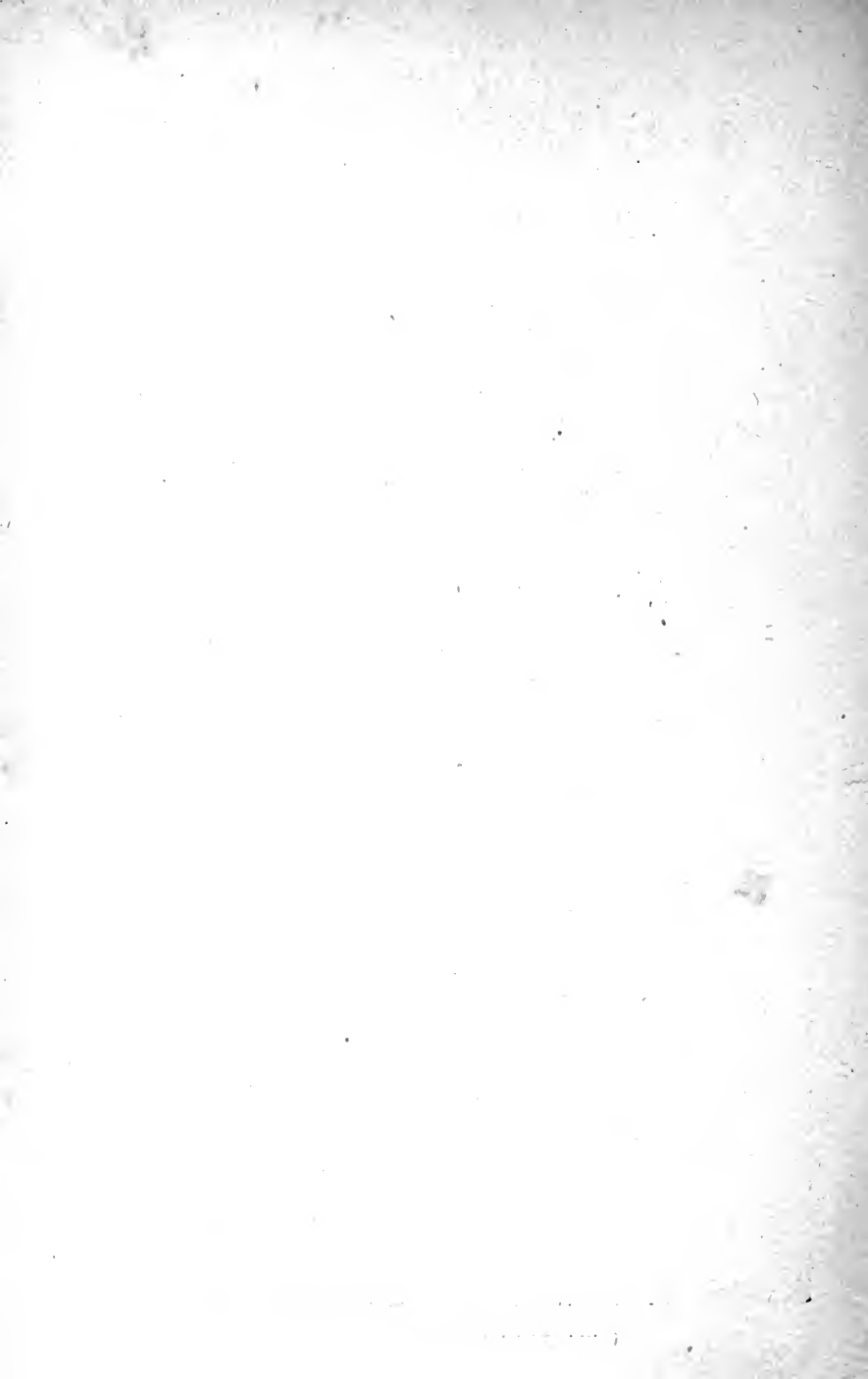
to his erring child ; his simple piety and faith—all were painted with marvellous fidelity to nature, all bore the unmistakable stamp of genius. At one or two critical moments Mr. Irving's individuality was perhaps a little too pronounced, but the impersonation as a whole was a fine one and a faithful.

The production of Mr. W. G. Wills's version of *Faust*, on the night of Saturday, December 19th, 1885, was remarkable for two points : it gave London playgoers a spectacle such as even the Lyceum stage had never before presented, and it further gave them a Mephistopheles without equal in the history of the stage. Beyond these two features there was little in the new *Faust* that had not been done, and done as well, before. But what exceptions these two points were !

Weird and almost superhumanly vivid as must have been the imagination which conjured up the unholy revels of Walpurgis Night on the Brocken, its wildest dreams were realised upon the Lyceum stage ; and grimly humorous, splendidly Satanic, as was Goethe's conception of Mephistopheles, the terrible and fantastic



MR. IRVING AS MEPHISTOPHELES.



creation was embodied with perfect fulness and fidelity by Mr. Irving.

Critics and commentators without number have so thoroughly thrashed out the *motif* and construction of the great poem upon which this latest dramatic version was based, that it is only necessary to deal with what was actually put before the audience by Mr. Wills and Mr. Irving.

Mr. Wills, in his share of the work, showed a commendable regard for the integrity of the original. It was Goethe anglicised; and even when the adapter found it necessary to strike out a path for himself, he did so with discretion, and diverged as little as possible from the sequence and spirit of the poem. Mr. Wills gave, perhaps, a little too much prominence to the pessimistic side of the tragedy. Mephistopheles was so pitilessly sardonic; Margaret's farewell cry, "Heinrich! Heinrich!" so rich in hope and promise, was expunged, and the curtain fell upon a Faust dragged to perdition by Mephistopheles, and without apparent hope of redemption from the purgatorial fires; yet that is perhaps a detail which would bring the

great play to a more artistic as well as a happier climax.

The sardonic *diablerie* of Mephistopheles, as shown by Mr. Irving in every gesture, glance, and word, was marvellous. The sense of power conveyed by the cruel face made the undercurrent of mocking humour the more comprehensible. It was evident, from the moment when the grim, cynical features peered through the cloud of vapour in Faust's study, that Mephistopheles was so sure of his prey, that his power over his victim was so absolute, that he could afford to unbend; that the rigid muscles could well relax into a sardonic smile; that the lips, curling in devilish scorn, could condescend to juggle with words, to taunt poor purblind man, to sneer at a weak woman, to bandy repartee with and fool to the top of her bent an amorous Martha. The potency of the Mephistopheles of Mr. Irving was so all-pervading, so palpable, that it was not surprising that he played with his victim, and thrust him down to perdition with a laugh.

Now and then the humour of Faust's tempter smacked just an atom of ordinary comedy; yet

when Mephistopheles was on the stage all else sank into insignificance, and this, be it said, not because of undue or inartistic obtrusiveness, but by sheer force of the fascination of the figure.

Although it may appear a doubtful compliment, it is a fact that Mr. Irving's physique proved peculiarly adaptable for the impersonation. The minimum of make-up could and did produce a perfect Mephistopheles. The glittering eyes, the curiously heavy brows, the long, gaunt visage, all the materials for an ideal Mephistopheles were there, and the actor was too true an artist not to take advantage of them to the full.

Even the perennially discussed individualities of style stood Mr. Irving in good stead in the new *rôle*, the Evil Spirit being usually credited with a cloven hoof and a slight lameness, which fully justified Mr. Irving's gait in the part.

It was in Faust's study—a grim chamber, hung about with stuffed monsters, crammed with scientific apparatus, and illumined only by a flickering lamp, that Mephistopheles first appeared, coming from a cloud of mist which

hissed and curled up into the dim shadows of the roof. Mephistopheles then looked more like Dante than himself, and in this character he first tempted his victim, and gave the audience a fine little bit of grim comedy when he donned the robe of Faust and gave the student who called in quest of the great scholar some diabolically cynical advice about women. In the scene in St. Lorenz Platz, despite its splendid grouping, Mephistopheles took part in somewhat too pantomimic business with the drunken revellers; but the scene at the City Wall, in which Mephistopheles taunted Faust with his super-sensitiveness, and sneered him into sin, was excellently done. So too were the capital bit of gruesome comedy in Martha's house, when Mephistopheles, with mischievous humour and mocking cynicism, told the trumped-up tale of the death of her husband; and the great garden-scene, with its irritating alternations of dialogue, but also its irresistible Mephistophelean humour.

The episode in the church, when Mephistopheles whispered evil counsels into the ear of the praying Margaret, was subtle and effective.

The stage management of this act throughout was beyond praise, and the effect of the final moment, when Mephistopheles was alone upon the stage, crouching beneath a statue of the Madonna, trying to shut out the sound of the holy music, and at the same time wearing an expression of devilish triumph and malignancy, was superb.

But perhaps the crowning triumph of Mr. Irving, both as actor and manager, was reached in the remarkable scene upon the summit of the Brocken, where Walpurgis Night revels, weird, fantastic, grim, ghastly, yet picturesque beyond description, revealed Mephistopheles at the very apex of his mad wickedness. Reveling in the unholy antics, he stalked and hobbled about the stage, caressing foul goblins and repulsive apes, calling legions of spirits with a word, and dismissing them with an imperious gesture, and at last standing amidst lurid flames and utter desolation, alone, triumphant, devilish.

The "Revisioners" having abolished hell, Mr. Irving did his best in this scene to show what it might have been, and neither Dante nor Doré

ever had a more ghastly, lurid, appalling vision, and perhaps no audience ever heard a more perfectly inhuman laugh of triumph in its infernal cynicism, than that given by Mephistopheles when the lovers meet in the garden after he himself had been driven cowering from Margaret's presence by the uplifted cross.

Faust had, as it deserved, a quite stupendous success. Indeed, it seemed as if Mr. Irving's jocular reference in his speech upon the first night of its production, to the introduction of new features from time to time, so that an element of variety might be imported into its six-hundred-nights' run, would in all sober earnest prove prophetic. As a matter of fact the play ran right through the season of 1886, and was revived again in unbroken sequence, continuing the run until April 23rd, 1887, and it was not until the 244th representation, on November 15th, 1886, that Mr. Irving even deemed it politic to introduce the promised new element in the shape of the introduction of the famous scene in the witches' kitchen, which, needless to add, was put upon the stage with characteristic thoroughness.

The withdrawal of *Faust* was followed by a series of short revivals of favourite pieces, among them being *The Merchant of Venice*, *The Bells*, *Pickwick*, and *Olivia*; the last performance of the season, on July 16th, being that of *The Merchant of Venice*, in which Mr. Irving surpassed himself as Shylock.

But prior to this a notable performance, though only a single representation of the drama, was held at the Lyceum for the benefit of the poet and dramatist, Dr. Westland Marston.

The event proved an instance of Mr. Irving's conscientiousness as an artist, and kindness as a man, when on the afternoon of June 1st he revived the sombre drama *Werner* for the benefit of his old friend. With a thoroughness which was peculiarly graceful under the circumstances, Mr. Irving went to as much trouble and expense in the provision of dresses and scenery as if an extended run were expected. Special incidental music was composed, and the drama was strengthened by a new and effective scene written at Mr. Irving's suggestion by Mr. Frank Marshall. The result was not only

the realisation of the substantial sum of £800 for the *bénéficiaire*, but also an artistic success.

As Werner Mr. Irving once more engrossed the attention of the audience whenever he was upon the stage. Not only was his appearance curiously impressive, his white hair, dark, restless eyes, and incessant movement compelling them to follow him in every gesture, by which, quite as much as by the spoken text, he reveals the sensitive nature of the man. Excellent in the earlier part of the play, irritated and rendered morbidly petulant under the pressure of poverty; more excellent still in the curious reasoning as to the varying degrees possible in crime, in which Werner enunciates arguments to be adopted with terrible logic later on by his guilty son, Mr. Irving, with true artistic instinct, reserved the superlative force of his acting for the final scene, and so confirmed and consummated the success of one more remarkable and thoughtful impersonation.

Mr. Irving's third American tour, which was also destined to prove successful, commenced in New York on November 7th, 1887, and on his return from the States he reopened the Lyceum



MR. IRVING AS ROBERT MACAIRE. MR. WEEDON GROSSMITH AS
JACQUES STROP.

with a revival of *Faust*, following this with a revival of *The Amber Heart* and *Robert Macaire*

on May 23rd, which sufficed to fill the theatre until the close of the season on July 7th, when, in the customary speech, Mr. Irving promised *Macbeth* as his next Shakespearean revival.

This promise he redeemed on December 29th, when the great play was revived with elaborate and magnificent stage effects and scenery, and ran throughout the following season. For the first time since his appearance upon the London stage, Mr. Irving was compelled to absent himself through illness during part of the run of this play, from January 17th to the 26th, 1889, during which period *Macbeth* was excellently impersonated by Mr. Hermann Vezin.

On April 26th, Mr. Irving and his company had the honour of appearing before the Queen and the Prince and Princess of Wales at Sandringham, in *The Bells* and the trial scene from the *Merchant of Venice*, and Mr. Irving was the recipient of much flattering criticism from his royal audience.

Ever a diplomat of diplomats, Mr. Irving was not the man to let the centenary of the French Revolution pass without a discreet dramatic



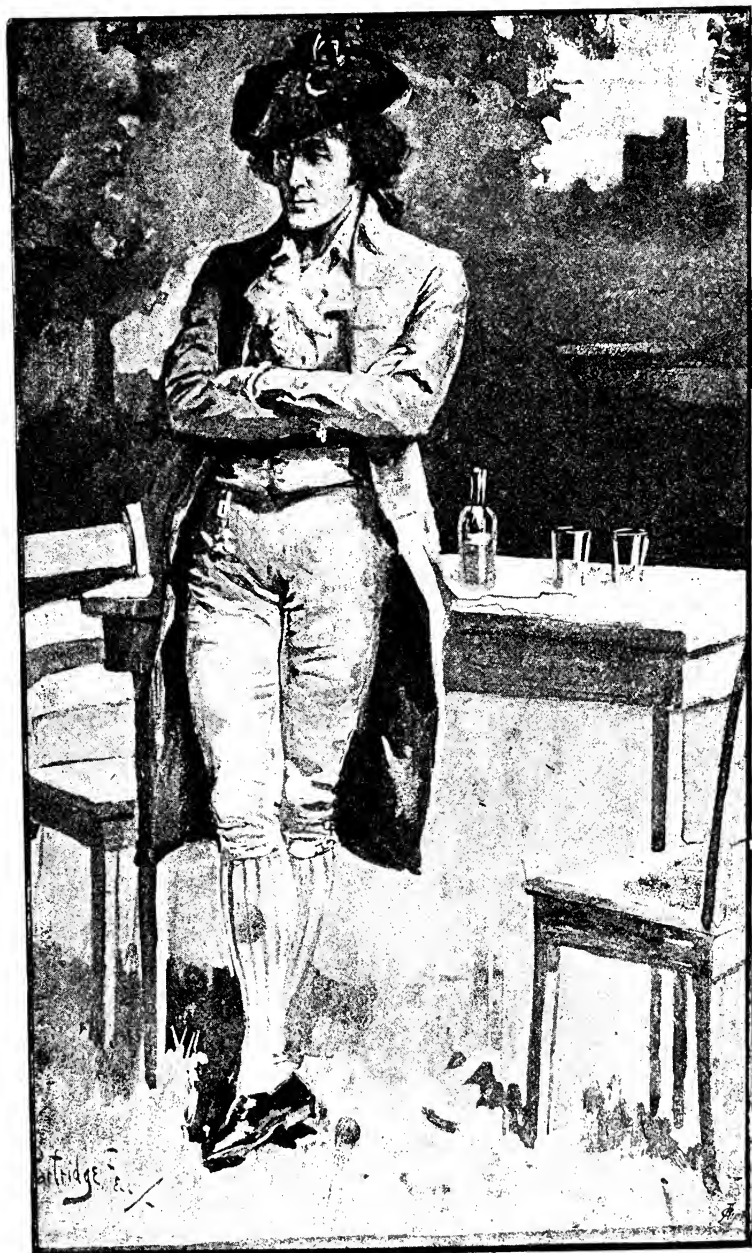
MR. IRVING AS MACBETH.



exploitation of its artistic and financial possibilities. With all the world flocking to Paris to the great Exhibition, and crossing the Channel to round off their holiday in London, what so safe a card to play as one directly concerned with the great celebration? With a little literary doctoring at the hands of Mr. W. H. Pollock, there was an old Adelphi drama ready to hand, and if Benjamin Webster, with his comparatively limited spectacular resources, could make Watts Phillips's melodrama *The Dead Heart* a success, why should not Mr. Irving, with his prestige, his popularity, his splendid facilities, all aided by the sentiment of the centennial celebration, do the same? That he did so, and more, is now a matter of history.

Nor was this result surprising. The curtain had not long risen on the night of September 28th, 1889, when it was evident not only that Mr. Irving was determined to give the revival the advantage of all that taste, research, and lavish outlay could command, but that there was, after all, so much humanity in the old play that it might well have held the stage again awhile, even without the attraction of such

magnificent mounting and the adventitious aid of the Revolution centenary. Full of stirring incidents and opportunities for a potent and astute stage-manager to evolve marvels of spectacular effect, and dealing with a period absolutely crowded with emotional conditions, *The Dead Heart* could scarcely fail to at least excite some popular interest. Staged and acted as it was at the Lyceum, it became the sensation of the autumn season. Opinions might differ as to the realism of Mr. Irving's dishevelled locks and flowing beard, and the rapidity of his recovery of something like reason after his release from eighteen years' incarceration in the Bastille—but the surging mob of maniacal men and unsexed women which filled the stage with its inarticulate cries, its mad dancing of the Carmagnole, and inhuman gambols at the taking of the Bastille, and the picturesque nobility of Robert Landry as he awaited his voluntary martyrdom on the scaffold, were very real and very fascinating. And so this dramatic picture of the Revolution, with its central group of interesting figures all "palpitating with actuality," was "restored"



MR. IRVING AS ROBERT LANDRY



by the great actor-manager, and all London rushed to see it.

In Robert Landry Mr. Irving was once more able to display the artistic versatility in a single *rôle* which is one of his strong points. In the prologue Robert Landry was the joyous lad—handsome, frank, debonair, irresistible, an artist-patriot almost reckless in his boyish self-abandonment, an ardent lover, with, as he believes, a long vista of happy life stretching away before him. Suddenly all is changed: the young patriot is thrown into the Bastile, not again to see the light of the sun until eighteen years later, when, upon the seizure of the prison by the Revolutionaries, he rushes, dazed and blinded, back to light and life and liberty. But his bewilderment is rather physical than mental, and ere long he recovers his wits, only to gain a knowledge bitterer than death. The woman in whose faith and constancy he trusted has married. Then, with inimitable art, Mr. Irving depicted Robert Landry as a man restored to life and freedom, but valuing neither, as his heart was dead within him.

From this stage to the sublime self-sacrifice

with which the drama closes, Mr. Irving's impersonation became consistently impressive. His first callous indifference to the prayer of his old love for the life of her son, the young Comte de St. Valéry, now in Landry's power and condemned to death—an indifference intensified into pitilessness by the knowledge that his old-time enemy, the Abbé Latour, was the young man's tutor; the terrific duel to the death with the Abbé, after the discovery of his perfidy in the old days, in keeping back Landry's reprieve; his ultimate relenting for the sake of the effort which the young Comte's father had made for him eighteen years before, and the final sublime sacrifice upon the scaffold, were all intense and emotional in the extreme, and the play was made, like almost everything touched by Mr. Irving, an artistic and financial success. The complexities of Landry's character made the part a satisfying study for the critical; the spectacular magnificence delighted the lovers of display; the strong humanity of the story appealed to all, and *The Dead Heart* revival became one more proof that Mr. Irving had not rashly undertaken the task of gauging



MR. IRVING AS RAVENSWOOD.



public taste as a manager, as well as gratifying it as an actor.

Upon the night of Saturday, September 20th, 1890, Mr. Irving produced with magnificent scenic effects and unqualified artistic success Mr. Herman Merivale's blank verse play, *Ravenswood*, based upon Sir Walter Scott's story, "The Bride of Lammermoor," himself creating the part of Edgar, the Master of Ravenswood. Although the drama diverged in many points from the story, the spirit of the original was admirably preserved; and although there was a certain inevitable sombreness and gloom about a play in which the principal characters are so obviously the puppets of a terrible and fatal destiny, the whole work was instinct with a dignity, a pathos, a grace, a romance, which threw the glamour of poesy over even the most harrowing scenes, raising them to pure tragedy and making them an absorbing and fascinating study.

As the Master of Ravenswood Mr. Irving added a noble and beautiful creation to his *répertoire*. Whether as the orphaned and beggared son of the earlier scenes, in which

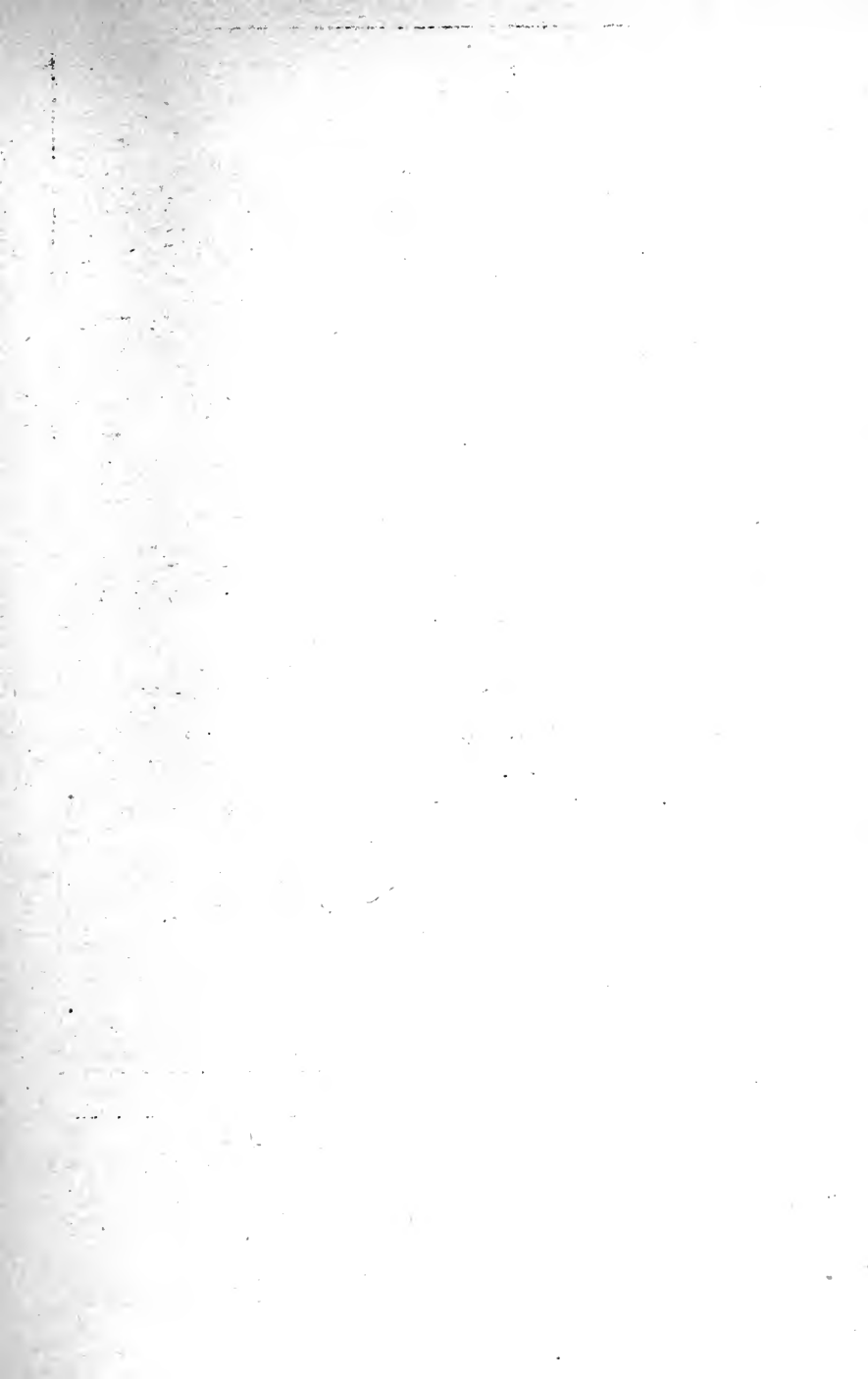
there is a Hamlet-like intensity of filial affection and bitter sense of wrong ; as the chivalrous, tender, passionate lover whose wooing is idyllic in its grace and charm ; as the despairing, heart-broken man who reels in the weakness of fever to the aid of his betrothed wife, only to find that she has agreed to wed another ; or as the desperate, wretched soul racked by the sense of loss and the suspicion of treachery, he was perfect in his subtle art, his personal distinction, the inimitable refinement and intellectuality of his conception of the part. A compound of Hamlet and Romeo, with all the miserable sense of impotence to avenge the wrongs of a dead father, and all the ill-starred love for a girl whose family is at deadly feud with his own, Edgar, the Master of Ravenswood, is a powerful and tragic conception, and Mr. Irving brought out all the intense pathos and beauty of the *rôle* with consummate art. Even in his inarticulate cries of scorn and subtle indications of an effort at self-control under the taunts of Lady Ashton, Mr. Irving gave ample proof of the perfection and delicate finish of his art ; and it speaks eloquently for his genius that, despite

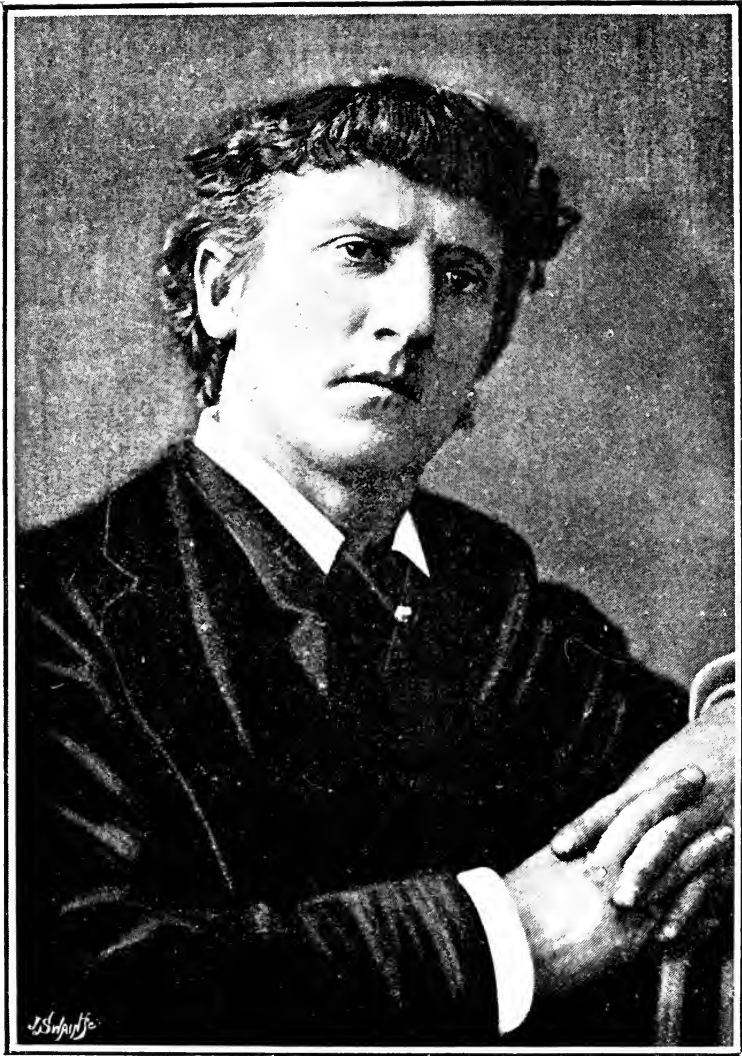
the innately and persistently melancholy nature of Edgar, he never failed to grip the attention and compel the sympathy of the audience from the moment of his first impressive entry upon the occasion of his father's funeral, when with a stern sadness he commands the bearers to "set down their burden" that he may commune with his dead, until that other solemn moment, when he finally rushes from the stage on learning the death of Lucy, with the wild cry that he must "hold her dead corse in his arms—the rest is nothing!"

Mr. Irving's genius both as actor and manager was patent in every detail of the play and of his own impersonation, and *Ravenswood*, in the face of obvious difficulties, proved a dual triumph and so great a delight to cultivated playgoers that it is no longer difficult to understand the zeal of those enthusiasts who gathered around the pit-door of the theatre ten hours and a half before the opening of the doors. Such acting as Mr. Irving's, and such exquisite beauty as that of the mounting of *Ravenswood*, are just those things which cannot be bought too dearly. A keen pleasure at the time, such an experience remains

a notable memory for ever, and the playgoing public owe a debt to Mr. Irving for artistic and emotional delights which no amount of cordial recognition of the great work which he has done for the stage can ever pay.

On December 20th and 27th, 1890, Mr. Irving, reverted once more to his powerful impersonation of the haunted burgomaster Mathias in a revival of *The Bells*, which proved to have lost no iota of its hold upon the lovers of weird and grim melodramatic acting of the first school, and upon January 5th, 1891, he revived *Much Ado about Nothing* in the superb fashion of his former revival of this exquisite play, and again delighted his audience with the perfection of high comedy as Benedick.





MR. WILSON BARRETT, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY J. THOMSON, 70, GROSVENOR STREET.

"There's a divinity
That shapes our
ends."
Hamlet
Wilson Barrett

WILSON BARRETT.

AN enthusiast for the drama and everything connected with it from his earliest youth—as he told his audience upon a notable occasion—he would hurry into the pit of the Princess's Theatre to satisfy his theatrical cravings with the contemplation of Charles Kean in one or other of his great impersonations, it is yet only during the last decade that the name of Wilson Barrett has become a household word with London playgoers. But during that decade he has worked wonders by sheer force of talent, courage, and perseverance.

Until September 20th, 1879, when he appeared as the advocate Pomerol, in *Fernande*, at the opening of the Court Theatre under his management, Mr. Barrett had been, if not exactly wasting his fragrance on the desert air, at least only undergoing a training, valuable enough as it proved, in the provinces, where he

speedily acquired a name as an enterprising and discreet manager, and an actor of more than average intelligence and promise.

Mr. Barrett's first appearance was at Halifax in 1864, when he was eighteen years old, and he received a guinea a week as "general utility," with a dance between the acts. But after six weeks he was entrusted with a leading juvenile part, having the book handed to him half an hour before midnight one night, with instructions to copy out, learn, and act his part upon the following evening. Little then did the young actor think of the time to come when, as lessee of a great London theatre, he should within the compass of a very few years pay no less a sum than £75,000 in authors' fees alone.

It was during these provincial wanderings that Mr. Barrett had an amusing experience while playing Triplet in *Masks and Faces*, which afforded somewhat of an argument against absolute realism on the stage.

In the attic scene, in which good-natured Peg Woffington sends a pie for the delectation of the poor broken-down gentleman and his starving little ones, Mr. Barrett, knowing that

the children who appeared with him were not too well accustomed to good solid meals, took care to provide a genuine beefsteak pie each night, which they consumed with unmistakable gusto, he, too, taking his share of the realistic meal. But one night, no sooner had Triplet inserted the knife in the crust of the pie than a malodorous savour assailed his nostrils, and compelled him to "make believe" that he was enjoying the welcome food.

Not unnaturally, he thought that the children would not be so squeamish, and duly gave them their portions. But to his horror they remained upon the plates untouched, and the curling lip of disdain was the only indication which they gave of their knowledge of its presence. The situation was critical. "Eat, you little beggars, eat!" said the actor, *sotto voce*. But it was no good. Nature asserted itself over art, and for once Mistress Woffington's bounty was unappreciated.

The incident reminds one of the conceited young London star who, when touring in the provinces, arrogantly demanded a real chicken in one of his scenes, instead of a

“property” make-believe. The stage-manager, after bearing with his upstart ways as long as he could, quietly said at last : “All right, Mr. Dash ; I’ll remedy it to-morrow. You play the part of a man who is murdered, don’t you ?” “Yes,” returned the star. “Very good,” replied the manager, “*I’ll take care that the poison is real !*”

As some men are born great, so, it would seem, are some born to a certain class of dramatic work. If ever there was a born actor of romantic drama of the robust and picturesque school, Mr. Wilson Barrett is the man. An expressive, handsome face, well-set-up figure, resonant voice, and considerable grace and dignity of bearing, he is the *beau idéal* of a hero of romance. In an age by no means insusceptible to the merits of muscularity, Mr. Barrett’s admirable physique gave him an initial advantage. To this were added distinct talent of a very high order, courage, modesty, pluck, good taste, and minor characteristics equally charming, with the result that when he came to London he was seen, and he conquered.

With excellent discretion Mr. Barrett, having gauged his strength and tested his capacity in the art of acting, quickly identified himself with a particular class of character, only diverging from it now and again into some widely dissimilar field, as if of set purpose to show the public that he could, and he would, extend the compass of his artistic efforts.

But when his excursions into the realm of pure tragedy and Shakespearean fantasy are remembered, and all due credit is given to the actor for impersonations of quite exceptional merit, the fact remains that the mention of the name of Wilson Barrett calls up in the minds of the majority of practised playgoers memories of romantic heroes—romantic in their essential attributes, whether ruffling in the lace and velvet of a Lord Harry Bendish; pacing in barbaric pride or weary dignity in the white and classic robes of Claudian; staggering in picturesque dissipation as Wilfred Denver; moving with measured stately steps, clad in the spotless robes of the patriot Junius; passing through dire suffering with manly pluck and pathetic power as Harold Armytage; or posing

with facile grace as Jack Hearne, the Romany Rye, or gipsy gentleman—always romantic, always suffering unmerited ills, always sure to emerge triumphant in the final act, as becomes so virile, so virtuous, so sympathetic a hero.

Mr. Barrett's career has not been one of unclouded success, but it is on record to his honour that he never put a play upon the stage, or assumed a new part, without doing his utmost to make both deserve, even if they did not command, success. And it is yet more to his credit that even in those cases where the financial result has not been of the greatest, if he has been convinced of the intrinsic worthiness of the work he was presenting he has at least kept it upon the boards sufficiently long for it to achieve an artistic success.

Courage, enterprise, honest endeavour, and thoughtful study, these have been the dominant notes in Mr. Barrett's stage policy, and, as such excellent qualities should do, they have won for their possessor an enviable position and reputation in the record of the stage of to-day, as well as a large and enthusiastic following.

Certain creations which the persistent play-

goers of the last ten years will instinctively recall, would have been, if not impossible, at least very much less satisfying, in the hands of any other player of the period. not for lack of adequate histrionic capacity, but because Mr. Barrett, like all strong personalities, possesses certain conspicuous characteristics, thoroughly individual, though not eccentric enough to have been stigmatised as mannerisms, which have lent distinction to the rôles he has assumed, adding alike to their immediate effectiveness and to their enduring quality. To illustrate this more clearly, it is only necessary to mention the brilliant creation of Wilfred Denver, in *The Silver King*, a character which not only afforded Mr. Barrett magnificent opportunities, but which, probably, no living actor could have created with quite such convincing completeness.

As actor and as manager Mr. Barrett has given such repeated evidence of talent, of lavish expenditure of his own powers and discreet enlistment of those of others, of scholarly care and artistic feeling as regards the text and staging of the plays which he

has produced ; of being, in effect, " thorough " in everything to which he puts his hand, that he has won the respect of all who recognise and value clever and conscientious work for the stage ; while his personal charm of manner and obvious strivings to please the public and give them of his best, have won for him a large circle of enthusiastic admirers and loyal friends, as well as an honoured place in the ranks of the foremost actors of his day.

After M. Pomerol, in *Fernande*, ensued a number of brief impersonations at the Court and Princess's Theatres, including a thoughtfully played Claude de Courcy in *Courtship* ; a quiet, careful, and effective Henri de Sartorys, in *Frou-Frou* ; an original, boldly unconventional, and excellent Mercutio, full of humanity, and revealing traits hitherto for the most part hidden by actors of the part ; a dignified, earnest study of John Stratton, in *The Old Love and the New* ; and a remarkable representation of a youthful priest, as Friar John, in *Juana*, an impersonation which undoubtedly, and in the face of adverse fortune, helped to force upon the perception of *habitués* of the

theatre the fact that a new actor of quite exceptional merit—earnest, intelligent, with alert brain, a mastery of his craft, and every quality necessary to command success—had arisen in the dramatic firmament, and must hereafter take a permanent place in the critical chart.

Rarely has there been so much admirable blank verse wasted, permitted to die and be buried away out of sight and out of the memory of most, as in the case of Mr. Wills's beautiful but sombre drama *Juana*. Yet those who were present on the night of its production at the Court Theatre, on May 7th, 1881, must remember well the power with which Madame Helena Modjeska held the audience enthralled in the pathetic mad scene in the second act.

The play, constructed as unskilfully as it was gracefully written, was a failure, except in an artistic sense, and has only been revived once since, and then without success. But in it Mr. Barrett gave the public an excellent piece of work as Friar John, in which he presented a thoughtful, consistent, and dignified picture of a high-minded young priest, tried

by conflicting emotions, and declaimed with admirable art some of the most beautiful passages in a play rich in poetical diction.

But neither the pathos of Madame Modjeska, the elocution and art of Mr. Barrett, nor the picturesqueness of monkish processions and the weirdness of "ordeal by touch," could save the play, which, containing much beautiful work, the loss of which is a loss to dramatic literature, chiefly served to afford the public an opportunity of recognising an actor of rare promise in Mr. Wilson Barrett.

The first great success in the direction of that class of powerful romantic melodrama of contemporary life, which Mr. Wilson Barrett produced for a time with such marked success, was made by *The Lights o' London*, written by Mr. G. R. Sims, and produced at the Princess's Theatre on Saturday, September 10th, 1881. In *The Lights o' London* the broad human sympathy, the acute perception of the noble and the beautiful in common life and common people, the hatred of social shams, the love of all that is true and kindly, which marked the works of Dickens, were all present; and

beneath all the pathos and tragedy, the sin and suffering, the passion and the pain of the drama, ran a pleasant vein of humour, conceived in the true Dickens spirit. It was not left merely for the "gods" to recognise the strong situations and genuine value of the play. The orthodox affectation of languid cynicism in the stalls was lost in one great wave of sympathy, which spread throughout the house as situations of intense power and pathos followed each other with overpowering rapidity. The story of *The Lights o' London* is infinitely sad, but the humorous element skilfully relieves it; and the audience, as it followed the fortunes of the hero, Harold Armytage, felt that they were looking at life as it is, with all its strange vicissitudes and paradoxes, its joys and sorrows, its virtue and its vice, its trials and temptations, its sufferings and its triumphs. The story of the scapegrace but noble-hearted son, discarded by a stiff-necked father, and of the terrible troubles which follow, is excellently told, and in Harold Armytage Mr. Wilson Barrett was fitted with a part which enabled him to do full justice to his powers. His fine

face, instinct with intelligence, harmonised with the pure and manly sentiments of which he was the mouthpiece ; his resonant, musical voice and good presence lent dignity and strength to countless powerful situations, and his delivery of certain didactic passages, which in less skilful hands might have savoured somewhat of platitude, was marked by a nice appreciation of the limits of effective moralising. There was human nature in the play and the acting, and the result was a pronounced success.

On Saturday, June 10th, 1882, Mr. Barrett created the part of Jack Hearne, in Mr. G. R. Sims's gipsy drama *The Romany Rye*. Needless to say that as the Romany Rye, or gipsy gentleman, Mr. Barrett had a part which was calculated to display his physical attractions and artistic skill to the uttermost. The drama is a sensational *mélange*, in which burglary, murder, love, jealousy, gipsies, dog-fanciers, gin-shops, underground cellars, the pure air of the country, the pestilential effluvia of St. Giles's slums, courage and cowardice, picturesque manhood, primed with all the virtues, and flash villainy, treacherous and cruel, sweet girlhood

and degraded womanhood, the beauties of the Thames by moonlight and the filthy dens of the depraved and brutal in Ratcliffe Highway, are in one drama blent, and Zolaistic naturalism is the *mot d'ordre*. Mr. Barrett's part involved perhaps greater muscular than mental strain, for it must be exhausting for even a hero of melodrama to be perpetually rescuing virtue in distress, struggling very literally against overwhelming odds, and facing imminent peril and incalculable hardship ere justice is done and he comes to his own. But Jack Hearne was a manly, dashing fellow from first to last, the performance a really powerful one, and the whole production a signal success.

In its particular school of work Mr. Wilson Barrett never did anything finer than his creation of the striking character of Wilfred Denver, in Messrs. Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman's clever drama *The Silver King*, produced at the Princess's Theatre on December 26th, 1882. A handsome scapegrace, a slave, when we first meet him, to drink and dissipation, yet never lacking in a certain innate refinement and nobility; weak rather

than vicious, and led by his weakness to a tragic catastrophe, Wilfred Denver is an incarnate homily, but one that is never dull, never even didactic. Admirably written and full of splendid situations, *The Silver King* marked a new era in romantic melodrama, and furnished Mr. Barrett with quite one of his finest parts. The spectacle of a not innately bad man labouring under the awful belief that in a fit of drunken delirium he has committed murder is pathetic enough, but it is brightened in this case by the extreme tenderness and affection of Denver for his wife and children; and a note of intensely true pathos is struck when the man, flying for his life, yearns to kiss his sleeping children, takes a hesitating step or two towards their room, and then, with a broken-hearted cry that he is unworthy to touch them, goes out into his compulsory exile.

Nor is the moment when Denver first discovers the dead body of Geoffrey Ware, and believes that he has killed him, less effective. In it, Mr. Barrett rises to pure tragedy, and his horror is a thing not to be easily forgotten. When, after attaining fortune in

America, Wilfred Denver, the Silver King, returns to find his wife and children in dire poverty, and can only help them secretly, Mr. Barrett's pathos is of just the right tone—never whining or lachrymose, but as manly as it is true. Indeed, in all the light and shade of a picturesque but very exacting part, the actor proves himself to be a master of his art and a faithful student of humanity.

The character of Denver is conditioned by circumstances of peculiar gravity and terror, yet the sympathy of the audience is never alienated. A scapegrace brought to reason by the imagined commission of murder; dead to the world and all dear to him; returning with all the material elements of happiness, yet unable even to declare to his wife and children the fact that he is alive—rarely, indeed, has a story been told which appeals at once so strongly to the imagination and the humanity of an audience. And in the lowest depths of Denver's degradation there is an inextinguishable refinement; the pathos is true, and the mental agony so vividly depicted by Mr. Barrett as to ensure that the creation will

remain one of the most touching studies of the contemporary stage.

The make-up of Mr. Barrett in the third act was a masterpiece of artistic skill, which led Mr. Henry Arthur Jones to remark to him at rehearsal, "No one could possibly *be* half as good as you *look!*"

A curious and pathetic proof of the odd use to which stage "business" may sometimes be put occurs in a story told some time ago by Mr. Barrett in the *Theatre*. The "Spider" in *The Silver King* had a peculiar whistle, with which he used to signal to his accomplices, and after a while this whistle was raised from the individual to the general and became the signal of the whole company at the Princess's and of all the companies touring in the provinces—a masonic as well as windy suspiration of forced breath.

Mr. Barrett says that it was whistled into the wondering ears of many a would-be sleeper in the country towns when the "boys" were going home and bidding each other good-night. It was whistled by Jack across the street to Tom as a "Good-morning;" by Harry to

Dick as a "Come here, I want you ;" by Clem to Joe as a "Where are you?" And amongst others who acquired the art of rendering the signal to perfection was the pretty little son of two members of "Company K," a general favourite, who had the run of the theatre, and was simply the idol of his father and mother.

This little fellow would sometimes indulge his Bohemian instincts to the extent of breaking away from his parents' lodgings, bound for the theatre; and now and then he would be found amiably wandering and hopelessly lost, on which occasions he would announce that he was "Austin Arfur Loder," and "I'se lost myself and can't find my way home;" and to the question "Where is your home, my little man?" he would promptly and invariably reply, "Ze fee-a-ter."

This nomadic habit caused his parents some anxiety, but it was not considered serious until one day, in a quaint little town on the rock-bound east coast of Scotland, "Austin Arfur" was missing too long for the peace of those who were so devoted to him.

During the course of the play one evening,

in which, by an odd coincidence, the father and mother were simulating the joys of parents who had recovered their lost children, the landlady called at the stage door to know if Master Austin was at the theatre. He was not, and the actor and actress had to finish their performance distracted with fear as to their missing child.

Hurrying from the theatre to their lodgings at the first possible moment, it was only to find no news of their boy. Their distress was terrible, and all night long search was kept up, some of the good-hearted fellows at the theatre foregoing their rest to help in the pathetic business.

When day broke, the agonised father and mother and a comrade in the company searched the cliffs by the sea shore, the mother hoping still to find that the little Austin had fallen asleep in some grassy glade, while the father feared the worst.

At last, weary and sick at heart, they were turning to retrace their steps and renew their search in the town, when, by some strange instinct, the actor gave the "Spider's Whistle."

A faint echo seemed to come to them from below. "Answer, Tom," said the comrade. "I can't," replied the father, overcome with emotion, while the mother screamed, "Austin! Austin! where are you?" The faint sound of the whistle was heard again, and in another moment the father was making his way down the face of the cliff at the risk of his own life, to the cave whence the sound seemed to proceed.

The tide was rising. Every moment meant the nearer approach of death; but despair gave the father a new strength, and at last, clinging, sliding, leaping, panting, breathless, his hands covered in blood, he was at the mouth of the cave, and his child was safe in his arms, saved by the "Spider's Whistle."

On December 6th, 1883, Mr. Barrett produced the remarkable play *Claudian*, by Messrs. W. G. Wills and Henry Herman, himself assuming the title *rôle*. The drama contained much that was noble in sentiment, and was superbly staged and admirably acted. It tells the story of the crime, punishment, and repentance of a pagan libertine, who, for the murder of a holy

hermit who would have stood in the way of his unbridled passion, is condemned to perpetual youth, coupled with the doom of yearning to do good yet seeing all those whom he would bless cursed and blighted by the baleful influence which attends his every action. The prologue takes place in Byzantium, A.D. 362, and the play a century later.

Mr. Barrett's Claudian Andriates proved a fine study, picturesque and powerful to a degree. Whether as the handsome young patrician voluptuary of the Prologue, or the remorse-stricken man of the play, Mr. Barrett was admirable. His appearance was strikingly effective, his acting almost faultless. By a score of little touches he brought out the full significance of the story, and the classic dress of the period suited him to perfection. The earthquake tableau, where, in the midst of the ruined palace, Claudian poses in an attitude of horror and despair, was a scene not to be easily forgotten. Mr. Barrett's excellent elocution also stood him in good stead, and whether he was expressing the defiant voluptuousness of the patrician profligate, or the agony of the miser-

able, repentant man who, with a heart full of good intent, sees evil dog his footsteps everywhere, the actor's voice and gestures brought out the full force and significance of the text, and helped to bring about an unqualified success.

On May 22nd, 1884, Mr. Barrett produced a dainty and effective little piece, a tragedy in miniature, by Messrs. Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman, in which were sketched in dramatic form the episodes in the life of the ill-starred boy-poet Chatterton immediately preceding his pitiable death in the Brooke Street garret, blent skilfully with the love interest necessary to lend the story the element of romance requisite to ensure widespread popularity.

Gracefully, if now and then rhapsodically, written, Chatterton was an instant success. But this success was due in an even greater degree to the actor than to the authors. It would be scarcely too much to say that Mr. Barrett *was* "Chatterton," poet and play alike, for from first to last he overshadowed everybody else by the tenderness, pathos, and pictur-

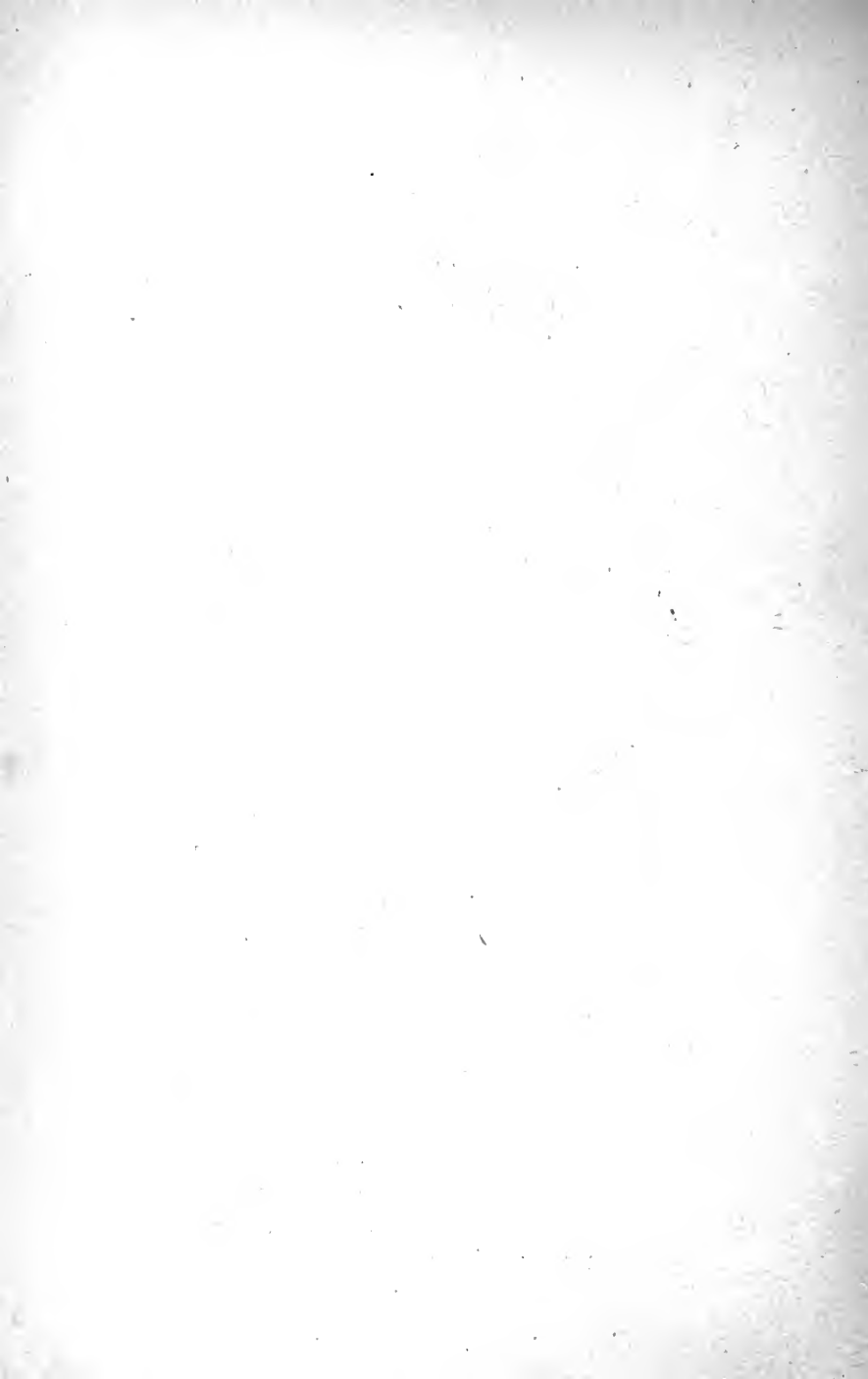
esqueness of his remarkable impersonation. He looked the handsome, harassed, weary, yet passionate and contemptuous boy-poet to the life, dowered with "the scorn of scorn, the hate of hate," jaded, starving, despairing, loving, to the bitter end of his few and stormy years.

The pride of Chatterton, his chivalrous love, his contempt for the dull, plodding, prosaic world, his passion for poetry, his mad ambition, were all indicated by Mr. Barrett as only genius could. By subtle gesture and splendidly versatile elocution the actor laid bare the very soul of the poet. As was said of Byron, "He made a pageant of his bleeding heart," but so delicately, and with such unerring tact, that he won for the mimic Chatterton a sympathy which the real poet sought in vain, even from posterity—usually so lavish when it is too late.

As a piece of delicate yet impassioned acting, Chatterton was a veritable artistic triumph. The admirable fashion in which Mr. Barrett declaimed the rather long-winded but elegantly written apostrophe to poetry remains a lucid memory with those who heard it; and the quickly following ecstasy and agony with which



MR. WILSON BARRETT AS HAMLET



he first finds Lady Mary's letter, offering him the love and fame and fortune he has craved so passionately, and all at once remembers that in his hopeless misery he has taken poison, and that the good news comes too late, was a marvellously rapid and convincing transition from rapture to despair, only equalled by the pathos of the death scene, which was a dramatic realisation of a beautiful and familiar picture.

Mr. Barrett's Hamlet was naturally the subject of much speculation, and the evening of October 16th, 1884, found an eager audience crowding every corner of the theatre. The grand simplicity of Shakespeare has too frequently been buried beneath a mountain of imaginary subtleties, and there has been no creation of Shakespeare's brain which has been the subject of so much pseudo-subtle speculation, and often absurdly unnecessary controversy, as Hamlet. The tendency has been to lay so much stress upon the character as a purely psychological study that the intense and passionate humanity of the young prince has been relegated to the background, as an aspect of the creation only worthy of secondary, if of any, serious

consideration. Ridiculous controversies have raged with the virulence of theological discussions upon what it has been the cant to call the vexed question of Hamlet's real or assumed insanity, when a reasonable reading of Shakespeare's text must surely set the question at rest for ever.

It was a matter for congratulation that Mr. Barrett's Hamlet was so vividly instinct with human life, and with passions common to all humanity, that it became no longer a mere psychological study, to be critically dissected as a surgeon would dissect a corpse, but a living, breathing personality, a man with all the strength and weakness of manhood,—a noble nature weighed down with a heavy burden of grief and an onerous duty of revenge; but, for all that, one whose grief was as real, and commanded as genuine a sympathy, as the troubled career of some living person near and dear to our very selves.

Mr. Barrett's Hamlet was a young prince of noble nature, sorely tried by the conduct of his mother, and impelled by intense filial affection to avenge the foul murder of his father.

A very comprehensible character and condition this, and there is, very properly, no question about the sanity of Hamlet as represented by Mr. Barrett. By making it patent at once that Hamlet is no crack-brained prince, but a youth whose trouble is so heavy that it compels him to a course opposed to his natural kindness, Mr. Barrett secured the immediate interest of his audience, and by emphasising consistently from beginning to end his intense love for his father, the new Hamlet compelled sympathy.

It was thus that Mr. Barrett instinctively took the surest road to popularity. His Hamlet was a man of like passions with ourselves, differing only in degree. Filial devotion, utter horror of a most foul crime, a painful sense of the burden laid upon his youth, changing what should be a period of joy into a time of plotting, and the agony of a mind racked by conflicting passions,—these were the notes upon which the new Hamlet played, and with such skill that his audience were at one with him from end to end. By making Hamlet comprehensible Mr. Barrett by no means made

him commonplace, and although his impersonation was so thoroughly human and sympathetic as to be intelligible to the most unlettered of his audience, it still afforded ample material for study by the cultured and the critical.

From the moment of his impressive entrance, with the slow and measured step of sorrow, the one dull blot upon the boisterous gaiety of a semi-barbaric court, glittering with gold and colour—to the touching death, with the portrait of his well-loved father at his lips, the new Hamlet carried the audience with him in a creation at once emotionally and intellectually satisfying. Shakespeare, harassed by his learned commentators, has been compared to Actæon, worried to death with his own dogs. Mr. Barrett called off the dogs, and for that the countrymen of Shakespeare should be grateful.

It may be thought that the mere *physique* of such a character as the student-prince is a matter of comparatively little moment, but such is not by any means the case. To enjoy a representation of *Hamlet*, or any other play, it is essential that the audience should be in full sympathy with the prominent personages

brought before them. The contemplation of a play should be one of the most perfect sources of æsthetic gratification, and this can only be when the senses are simultaneously pleased; when there is no discordant note in the chord which is to charm us out of ourselves. A coarse face may be wedded to a melodious voice, or a silver voice to a clumsy figure and uncouth gestures, and the result is that the bad neutralises the good.

Fortunately, in the Hamlet of Mr. Wilson Barrett the æsthetic harmony was complete. A perfect Hamlet should at least approach our ideal of the highest standard of physical and mental refinement. His mind should teem with cultured ideas, and his face and form and bearing coincide with the lofty tenor of his mind. The thoughts conceived by the student-prince and lover are of the highest, and the voice, the gesture, the movement in which these bright thoughts find expression should be too, in their way, of the most perfect that can be conceived. No harsh or vulgar accent should mar the sublimity of the sentiments which the young prince utters in his dire distress

and innate nobility of mind; no clumsy gait should detract from the awe, the pathos, or the dignity of his bearing in the various life-scenes in which he is forced to take part; no *outré* fancy in the fashion of his apparel should distract the mind of his audience from the perfect comprehension of Shakespeare's magnificent creation. The words of the part should flow fittingly from the lips of the actor, whose every look and gesture should help us to realise the character which was so very real to Shakespeare, as he painted with a loving, lingering pen the portrait of one of the most human and pathetic figures in the world's dramatic literature.

Mr. Wilson Barrett fulfilled these conditions with a quite exceptional completeness. Physically he was an ideal Hamlet,—the handsome, weary face and boyish figure realising to the full the ideal portrait which the student of Shakespeare must inevitably have painted in his own mind. Voice, gesture, and movement were alike good, and in the details of dress the new Hamlet evidently spared no pains to be archæologically as well as æsthetically correct.

Herein may be found in a great degree the secret of his success. The intellect and the eye were at once satisfied, and a pleasant sense of completeness was felt by the most exacting and sensitive spectator. Mr. Barrett's Hamlet was not only the most human of modern times, but it gave us humanity at its best.

As an instance of the odd experiences, semi-humorous, semi-pathetic, which fall to the lot of actors more frequently than to ordinary humdrum folk, it may be told how, during the run of *Hamlet* at the Princess's Theatre, on arriving at his house "The Priory," North Bank, St. John's Wood, where George Eliot once lived, after the performance on a wretched winter's night, when the snow was several inches deep on the ground and in that half-frozen, half-thawed condition which is so intensely disagreeable, made still more unpleasant by a bitter north-east wind cutting into the very marrow of one's bones, Mr. Barrett saw leaning against the wall of the garden in the shadow the figure of a boy, apparently about twelve or fourteen years of age. Wondering what could have brought

the lad there, the actor unlocked the garden door, and went into his cosy sitting-room, not without some qualms of conscience at his indifference to the shivering figure he had left outside. Consoling himself with the reflection that the boy was going home, and had merely stopped to see him get out of his brougham, Mr. Barrett tried rather ineffectually to dismiss the lad from his mind. On the following evening the weather was, if possible, still more unpleasant, but on arriving at the house there was the same little shivering figure in the same attitude—not courting observation in the least, but rather seeking the darkest shadow the wall afforded. This second apparition was more than Mr. Barrett could resist. He called to the boy to come to him, and a brisk dialogue ensued.

“What are you doing here, my lad?”

“Waiting to see you get out of your carriage, sir, that’s all.”

“Were you not here last night?”

“Yes, sir.”

“But, my boy, you must be wretchedly cold and wet?”

“That’s nothing if I can only see you, sir.”

“What good can a hurried look at me do you?”

“It gives me courage to fight on, sir. I have heard of your early struggles, and how *you* conquered, and when I get down-hearted with my own troubles I always try to get a look at you, and so get fresh hope.”

This *naïve* tribute, or diplomatic little bit of flattery, not unnaturally led Mr. Barrett to ask the boy to come indoors. Very reluctantly he was induced to do so, and, on getting him into the room, the actor had a good look at him. Short for his age, with large brown eyes, a refined face, close-cropped light brown hair, a small mouth, and very small hands and feet, the former blue with cold, the latter enclosed in a broken, down-at-heel pair of boots, through which the slush and snow had penetrated; he had on a pair of very frayed grey tweed trousers, and an Eton jacket; in his hand he nervously twirled a cloth cap.

“You must be very cold, come and warm yourself at the fire,” said Mr. Barrett, drawing up a chair for the boy, determined to find out something of his history.

However, no persuasion could induce him to sit down, but there he stood at attention, waiting to be questioned. He would eat no supper, and said that his mother was awaiting him, and that *she* would have no supper.

This was enough for Mr. Barrett, who took up the cold joint and some bread, wrapping them in paper, with a bottle of wine, and gave them to him—with something else beside—bidding him go home, and wish his mother better times. Quite timidly the boy asked if Mr. Barrett could find some employment for him, and the actor promised to consult his business manager, Mr. John Cobbe, and told the lad to come on the following evening to the theatre. This he did. Mr. Barrett told him that he had talked the matter over with Mr. Cobbe, and had decided to try him as a messenger boy at first, leaving it to his own industry and perseverance to improve his position. The boy seemed deeply grateful, and Mr. Barrett sent for Mr. Cobbe.

“This is the lad I spoke to you about, Cobbe,” said the actor-manager.

A quick, searching glance from Mr. Cobbe,

a queer look of suspense and anxiety from the boy. Then the usually placid Mr. Cobbe began slowly to colour crimson from the nape of his neck to the tip of his nose, and to Mr. Barrett's astonishment he turned to him, and said,—

“ Mr. Barrett, this is not a boy at all, it's a girl ! ”

The figure in the jacket trembled a little, and the face grew as rosy red as Mr. Cobbe's, but not a word was spoken until Mr. Barrett broke the silence. “ Is this true ? ”

“ No, sir, it is not.”

“ I'll swear to it,” said Mr. Cobbe, “ you came here some weeks ago ; you had written to Mr. Barrett for an engagement, and he deputed me to see you. You then wore a black dress, a sealskin jacket, and a black velvet hat. I told you there was nothing for you in the way of employment, and you went away.”

“ Are you quite sure of what you say ? ” asked Mr. Barrett.

“ Quite certain,” replied his business-manager.

“ It is not true ! ” still persisted the young

person. Here was a dilemma. Mr. Barrett could not doubt Mr. Cobbe.

The accused one trembled and blushed like any school-miss.

“I’m afraid Mr. Cobbe is right,” said the actor at last, “and under the circumstances I must withdraw the offer I have made; if you are a girl you obviously cannot be a messenger boy, and there’s an end of the arrangement.”

“But he is wrong,” this was accompanied by such a distinctly feminine stamp of the foot that all that Mr. Barrett could do was to say as gently as possible, “I am afraid he is right, and I can only wish you good-night, and advise you not to masquerade in this way in the future.”

Then came the impulsive question, “Will you give me employment as a girl?”

Again the answer was compelled to be in the negative, and a flood of tears followed the refusal.

Mr. Barrett was sorry, but the Fates were not more inexorable.

One morning, taking up the daily paper, Mr. Barrett was reminded of the odd little figure in

the snow, and the curious incident in which it was the principal actor in a strange fashion, by reading under the heading :—

“A STRANGE CASE,”

that “a young woman named —— was sentenced to six months’ imprisonment for personating a boy !”

One of the most important dramatic events of 1885 took place on the 26th February at the Princess’s Theatre, when Mr. Wilson Barrett gave to the world for the first time an unpublished as well as unacted drama by Bulwer Lytton—a notable addition to the best works of its author. *Junius* approaches in style rather to *Richelieu* than to other of Lord Lytton’s works, making due allowance, of course, for the different periods with which the two plays are concerned. There is much nobility of sentiment couched in suitably noble diction ; much worldly wisdom conveyed in aphorisms, and a great deal of fine writing in the play—fine in the best sense of the word, not the gilt and tinsel artificiality of *The Lady of Lyons*. Whether it is in depicting the half-savage

sensuality and imperious self-indulgence of the ruling classes at a period when emperors were a law unto themselves, and government a tyrannic autocracy tempered by revolt and assassination, or whether it is in portraying the smouldering fires of rebellion in the hearts of dissatisfied patricians and an oppressed people, and contrasting the pure patriotism of a Junius with the unscrupulous and luxurious egotism of a Tarquin, the author is equally felicitous, equally vivid.

The Lucius Junius Brutus of Mr. Barrett consistently ignored the assumed foolishness of the patriot, and declined to emphasise the nickname Brutus bestowed upon him by the contemptuous Tarquin and his parasites, but which at the period when the drama opens had almost fulfilled its purpose, and was only necessary as a mask behind which, save before Tarquin and his following, Junius takes small pains to hide his real disposition. As Papinius says :—

“ Art thou so sure that Brutus is the clod
Which Tarquin’s scoff proclaims him ? Hast thou ne’er
Seen his lip writhe beneath its vacant smile ?
Seen his eye lighten from its leaden stare ?

And heard beneath that hollow-sounding laugh
The slow, strong swell of a storm-laden soul?”

Here was the key to Mr. Barrett's reading of the part. The patriot entered, clothed in white robes, superbly handsome, with classic features, white hair clustering round a noble forehead, and every movement full of a dignity which gave the lie to Tarquin's brutal nickname—an ideal Junius, the “noblest Roman of them all.” Alternately tender and bitterly scornful, gentle and indignant, intensely pitiful and passionately stirred to righteous vengeance culminating in the killing of Tarquin, Mr. Barrett lost no single one of the many opportunities of the part, and Junius proved an imposing and dignified figure, shining with greater lustre by the contrast of its classic simplicity and serenity with the gaudy, noisy, and effeminate parasites of the corrupt court of Tarquin.

The new play *Hoodman Blind*, by Messrs. Henry Arthur Jones and Wilson Barrett, produced at the Princess's Theatre on August 18th, 1885, was anticipated with considerable interest. It proved to be one more addition to the realistic-cum-sensational-cum-domestic

dramas familiar to London playgoers since the inauguration of the new school of work by the production of *The Lights o' London*.

The manly, handsome fellow, wedded to a charming and confiding wife; the happy home blighted by the machinations of a well-dressed villain; the facile descent from solid comfort to squalid misery; the curiously sensational incidental episodes and odd acquaintances; the final frustration of the villain's wiles and restoration of happiness to the devoted but hoodwinked couple,—are they not written in the chronicles of the stage at any time since the loves and trials of Harold Armytage and Bess his wife, or Wilfred Denver and the faithful Nell, won our tears and took fast hold of our hearts?

The ingredients for that class of popular dramatic work being, apparently, not capable of much variety, it is well that they should be blent with discretion, and the authors of *Hoodman Blind* certainly concocted a palatable dish, although the cayenne was perhaps a little too self-assertive for the taste of the fastidious few. Sound judgment was shown in basing

the play upon passions and motives common to all classes at all periods, and in exploding the fallacy that great cities enjoy a monopoly of vice.

The cruel wrong that might take place in a little old-world village such as Abbot's Creslow ; the fierce passions that have play amongst scenes of Arcadian beauty ; the love, the jealousy, the lying and slandering, the greed, the villainy that mar the lives of men and women, were shown to be as possible within the narrow limits of a hamlet as in the maze of monstrous London. And, by causing villainy to be enacted amid scenes of rural loveliness, the heinousness of crime was emphasised by force of contrast with its surroundings,—a perfectly legitimate method, utilised by the authors of *Hoodman Blind* with excellent effect.

The sketches of country life which preceded the realistic studies of squalid London had much in them of truth, the dialogue illustrating clearly the pettiness of rustic spite, the uncouth gambols of rustic humour, and the inordinate appetite of village folk for slanderous gossip. But the chattering village gossips, the garrulous

village patriarch, the hysterically cheerful village brats, the sturdy, stolid rustics, had been seen so often that the advantage supposed to be conferred by the inclusion of "thirty-two speaking parts" in one play was not so obvious as might have been wished.

Literary merit was not wanting in the drama, and sometimes reached a high level, even when the eloquent diction clothed a conventional idea, but artistic self-restraint seemed lacking in some of the violent sentiments attributed alike to the villain and the hero of the piece. The treacherous Mark Lezzard expressed an amiable desire to "gnaw the heart" of the woman who would not marry him; while the hero, Jack Yeulett, in an extremity of provocation, talked ghoulishly of tearing a body from the grave, stamping upon the dead flesh, and casting the morsels over the earth.

Mr. Wilson Barrett was well fitted with the manly and picturesque *rôle* of Jack Yeulett, a young Bucks farmer, who, having sown his wild oats and married a charming and devoted wife, buckled to at a more profitable form of husbandry, not without success. But the



MR. WILSON BARRETT AS JACK YEULETT.



Nemesis of his old follies dogged his footsteps, and, just as he was happy in the love of his wife and five-year-old boy, a cloud hung over the simple tranquillity of his home, in the shape of the foreclosure of a mortgage, which meant the rending from him of house and land which had been in his family for generations, but possessed the compensating advantage of enabling him to deliver the first telling speech in the play.

Then blow followed blow. The faithful wife was made, by the arts of the villain, to appear false, and in a painful scene Jack Yeulett, a village Othello, flung her from him and left his home, with the wish that he may never look upon her face again. Then followed the usual sequence of trouble for both, until, after learning the truth by a miraculous interposition of "the long arm of coincidence," the hero dragged the villain to an elevated plateau in the centre of the village, extorted confession, then hurled the cowering wretch down amongst the clamouring people, who, with the quick, unreasoning fluctuation of a mob, stood eager to rend in pieces the man before whom but a day earlier they had cringed.

The play was admirably staged, excellently acted throughout, and Jack Yeulett was as striking, pathetic, heroic a figure as Mr. Barrett of all actors could make him, and both as actor and manager Mr. Barrett scored one more distinct success.

As part-author with Mr. Henry Arthur Jones of the romantic drama *The Lord Harry*, produced at the Princess's on the night of February 18th, 1886, Mr. Wilson Barrett was responsible for a not very novel but distinctly popular play, produced with richness and beauty, and affording him a dashing, gallant rôle such as he and his admirers loved. Fascinating and romantic as the era of Cavaliers and Roundheads, ruffling gallants and sour-visaged Puritans, had so often proved before, it was not surprising that the clever *collaborateurs* should fail to find much that was strikingly new to introduce, save a quite remarkable pinioning of a gaoler by a prisoner who rushes from behind the door of his cell, and an even more startling effect in a fight upon the roof of a nearly submerged cottage—an incident which would have been perilously suggestive of a nocturnal en-



MR. WILSON BARRETT AS THE LORD HARRY.

counter of tom-cats on the tiles, had it not been part of a scene of such rare beauty that irreverent criticism was stopped at the lips. Naturally the play turns upon the rival loves of Lord Harry Bendish, Royalist and ruffler, and a grim and treacherous Roundhead, Captain Ezra Promise, and the poetic idea of the gallant Cavalier's love for the memory of the tiny Puritan maiden who had given him a kiss many years before is very dainty and charming.

As the Lord Harry, Mr. Barrett had a part that suited his handsome presence and gallant bearing to perfection. The chivalrous speeches came not only trippingly but fittingly from his tongue. In his soldierly capacity Mr. Barrett was *bon camarade par excellence*; as a lover he was all that is ardent and tender, and as a Royalist the personification of chivalrous loyalty—a gallant manly figure throughout, carrying the play triumphantly to success upon his own broad shoulders.

A scene of intense enthusiasm marked the final fall of the curtain at the Princess's on the night of May 1st, 1886, and rarely had such a scene ampler justification. It was but fitting

that a strikingly effective play, acted to perfection and superbly staged, should win such a success as was achieved by *Clito*, the new tragedy by Mr. Sydney Grundy.

There were those who, with ample faith in the managerial instinct of Mr. Wilson Barrett and the literary faculty of Mr. Grundy, hoped for rather than anticipated a success, when they heard that the new venture was to be a blank verse tragedy, with the action located in Athens in the year 400 B.C. But, as the event proved, the passions, follies, crimes, with which *Clito* was concerned were common to all time, and old as humanity itself; and this tragedy of ancient Greece was as full of moving interest as, and far richer in romance than, any modern drama of the sensational school, with which, indeed, it had nothing else in common, happily substituting a beauty and nobility of diction rare upon the stage of to-day for the sanguinary curses and platitudinising didactics of melodrama, and giving in its place loftily conceived tragedy, written with grace and vigour.

The story of *Clito* has all the simplicity of classic tragedy. A young Athenian sculptor,

Clito, pure and noble as a Greek Galahad, loathing the vicious luxury of the age, and fired with the wrongs of Athens, finds his adopted sister, Irene, in the power of a venal wretch employed by Helle, the mistress of the governor, Critias. He rescues Irene and joins a band of patriots, who plan the destruction of the palace and the sweeping away of Critias, Helle, and the vicious aristocrats by whom they are surrounded. Clito had often held the name of Helle up to scorn as the very synonym for all that was cruel and devilish, but Helle, at the instigation of the lustful Glaucias, seeks the sculptor in his studio, disguised, and practises all her arts upon him. Glaucias the cynic told her, "Art is immortal, but artists are mortal," and so it proved. Clito yielded without parley to the magic of Helle's wondrous beauty, and not only unwittingly betrayed his comrades by babbling to her of the plot, but, by visiting her at the palace, brought upon himself the odium of a traitor, only to find at last that the love for which he had sold himself, body and soul, was a lie. The vengeance of the patriots followed hard upon the heels of their betrayal, and fell

first upon Helle, who had fled to Clito for protection, and then upon Clito himself, who died, stabbed to the heart, at the side of the dead Helle, the last word upon his lips—
“Forgive!”

Here and there some slight anachronisms were evident, but for the most part the pathos and horror of the story were clothed in tender and terrible diction. The only humour which could be legitimately interwoven in a drama pitched in so high a key—satire of the keenest and the bitterest, the only humour possible in tragedy, and itself the very tragedy of humour—was introduced in discreet proportion, and the drama moved from first to last with firm, unflinching step.

Mr. Wilson Barrett's impersonation of Clito was entirely admirable,—the alternations of human passion and exalted patriotism; the agonising struggle of a noble nature against the subtle and unflinching arts of an abandoned woman; the humiliation and remorse after the grievous lapse,—all were presented with Mr. Barrett's customary power and facility, and Clito became the centre of unflinching interest.

The Greek dress of the young Athenian sculptor was worn by Mr. Barrett with natural dignity and grace, and throughout the play he was a picturesque and poetic figure, fit hero for a tragedy of classic Greece.

Perhaps one of the most melodiously given as well as exquisitely written passages in the play was that in which Clito described his ideal woman :

“ A woman, fair,
 For it is woman’s province to be fair,
 And yet whose beauty is her smallest grace :
 No mail-clad Amazon with helm and spear,—
 Her only shield her native innocence.
 The charm of gentleness is round her head,
 The light of truth is in her gentle eyes,
 Her garment the white robe of chastity :
 While Charity, of all the virtues Queen,
 Sits on her brow.
 Fearless in well-doing, in sorrow strong,
 Healer of wounds, affliction’s minister,
 More good than pious, just a little blind
 To mortal weaknesses. A woman born,
 Affecting not to scorn a woman’s fate ;
 At peace with destiny, her husband’s crown.
 Cheerful of spirit—empress of her home ;
 In presence tender and in absence true :
 One who, when travelling life’s common way,
 Glads every heart and brightens every eye :
 One in whose wake the beaten tracks appear,
 A little greener where her feet have trod ’

The play was staged with a lavish magnificence rare even under Mr. Barrett's liberal management; the acting of Miss Eastlake as Helle was in some respects the finest thing she had ever done, and, as a whole, *Clito* was a completely worthy production and a distinct artistic success.

After an extended tour in America, where he received a cordial welcome, on the 22nd December, 1887, Mr. Barrett made his reappearance in London, and a crowded audience received him, within the walls of the Globe Theatre, with an enthusiasm which must have reminded him of old days at the Princess's, and certainly proved that his temporary absence had not dulled their cordial goodwill and admiration for him.

The new drama produced upon the occasion was from the pens of Mr. Barrett and Mr. G. R. Sims, and *The Golden Ladder*, as it was called, exhibited a type of stage hero new to the actor. The Rev. Frank Thornhill proved to be a muscular Christian of missionary experience, and distinctly a son of the Church militant—a fine, manly fellow of noble instincts,

who gave early evidence of his generous nature by relieving the father of the girl he loved from threatened ruin, by the sacrifice of his own fortune. The heroine, not to be outdone in generosity, elected to marry Thornhill in his self-imposed poverty and share the hardships of life in Madagascar with him. After this came trouble upon trouble, in accordance with the habit of this class of drama to make its misery fertile after its kind, and a spell of poverty in Hampstead was followed by an agonising scene in Millbank, where the heroine was unjustly imprisoned for murder while her only child lay dying.

Mr. Barrett rarely looked better or acted with more force and pathos than in the exacting *rôle* of the Rev. Frank Thornhill. Manly, strong in body and mind, earnest and artistic throughout, he gave a picture of a noble-natured man fighting fortune bravely against fearful odds, with a sincerity and thoroughness which carried the audience with him, and secured an artistic success for a melodrama of too painful a tone to win enduring popularity.

A high-spirited, good-hearted, and altogether

lovable lad, to be presently transformed by events into the sterner stuff of triumphing and then sorrowing manhood, was the sort of character tolerably sure to appeal powerfully to Mr. Barrett's artistic sympathies, to gain the favour of an audience accustomed to see their favourite actor the central figure of stirring and romantic scenes, and further to win for its impersonator a great popular success. So it was not surprising that Mr. Hall Caine's powerful but rather sombre novel "The Deemster" should be adapted for the stage by the author and Mr. Wilson Barrett, and produced with complete success on May 17th, 1888, under the more attractive title *Ben-my-Chree*.

The Dan Mylrea was, of course, Mr. Wilson Barrett, and the *rôle* gave him many opportunities of displaying his versatility, of which he availed himself to the full. The impersonation was, in the earlier stages, so bright, breezy, lovable a piece of work, that the sympathy of the audience was secured at once, and, that achieved, Mr. Barrett could be trusted to do nothing to alienate it throughout the remainder of the play. The boyish debonair bearing in the

first place, the sudden access of natural triumph over his defeated cousin, and then the anguish of discovering that the man is dead, were so forcibly, so naturally, conveyed, that the audience were carried out of themselves by the sheer strength and compelling realism of the actor. Mr. Barrett once more proved himself an artist *au bout des ongles* in Dan Mylrea, which must always rank with his most popular, picturesque, and well-thought-out creations.

On February 12th, 1889, Mr. Barrett appeared in *The Good Old Times*, a new drama written by Mr. Hall Caine and himself; but the result was not wholly satisfactory. As John Langley Mr. Barrett was robust and manly as ever, but the redundancy of dialogue, the presence of many improbabilities, and the falling-off from the dramatic excellence of *Ben-my-Chree*, were too apparent, and the play could not be added to the list of Mr. Barrett's successes. Of course there were moments when the actor's personal energy and charm rose superior to the comparatively unfavourable conditions of a too sensational melodrama; but, judged as a whole, *The Good Old*

Times failed to satisfy those who were familiar with the vastly better work previously done both by author and by actor.

On the night of February 28th, 1889, Mr. Barrett appeared at the Princess's in a drama of his own. Succeed or fail, he could say of *Nowadays: a Tale of the Turf*, "Alone I did it!" No collaborator divided the honour or the responsibility. And *Nowadays*, happily, proved at least a tolerable success. The horse-loving British public, from the sporting butcher-boy with his shilling sweep to the noble Duke who plunges in five figures, might reasonably be counted upon to take some interest in a play in which all the action was made to revolve around a high-mettled racer; and when, in addition to the equine interest, a considerable amount of human sentiment was introduced, a certain conventionality alike of character and central idea could easily be condoned.

But the play found its most interesting feature in the fact that for once Mr. Barrett flew in the face of nature, relegated romance to oblivion, discarded alike picturesquely "looped and windowed raggedness," classic toga, Cavalier

plumes, the inky cloak, the Silver Regal hat of soft black felt with brim of subtly artistic curve, for the suit of rough grey frieze of a sturdy Yorkshireman, horsey and honest as a typical North-countryman should be.

And with the toga and the plumes went the highflown sentiment, the hairbreadth 'scapes, the heroic endurance of immeasurable wrong, the psychological subtlety, and the superhuman attributes of other days, for plain John Saxton was as homely, shrewd, big-hearted, obstinate a specimen of a downright manly man as Yorkshire itself could produce. The necessary pathos was provided by the presence of a well-loved daughter, who, yielding to the solicitation of the arch-villain of the story, not only marries him secretly, abandons her home, and aids him and his co-conspirators to steal and hide the Derby favourite, but, when a rescue party visits the Brixton stable to which the equine hero has been smuggled, very nearly shoots her father.

That Mr. Barrett could assume with so much success and so much force and realism the *rôle* of a grey-headed, rough-tongued old York-

shireman proved, in a way peculiarly gratifying to his most discreet admirers, that he possessed the versatility indispensable to acting talent of the first order, and that although apparently doomed by nature to the perpetual enactment of handsome heroes of romantic drama, he could, on occasion, shine very effectively as one of the rough diamonds of humanity.

On December 4th, 1890, after a successful tour in America and the provinces, Mr. Barrett assumed the reins of management at his new London home, the New Olympic Theatre in Wych Street, built upon the site of the old building where, as Hood said of himself and his brother wits, they would

“ In the small Olympic pit sit, split,
Laughing at Liston, while they quiz his phiz.”

Mr. Barrett opened his new theatre with a drama by Mr. Victor Widnell and himself, called *The People's Idol*.

The play chosen for the inauguration of the new theatre proved to be a somewhat conventional type of drama, dealing rather superficially with the great question of “strikes” and the

relations of capital and labour as they are understood or misunderstood to-day. In *The People's Idol* Mr. Barrett created the part of a certain well-born employer of labour, one Lawrence St. Aubrey, a young gentleman of most excellent presence and most tender sympathies, combined with an earnestness of purpose and a dogged resolution not to be cowed by threats, which redeemed the character from effeminacy. Tender as a woman with the unhappy souls who are reduced to misery by the strike, brave as an English gentleman should be when personal peril hems him in, a loyal and chivalrous lover, and a self-sacrificing elder brother to a selfish and weak lad who has got into a troublesome intrigue—there were many good points about Lawrence St. Aubrey, and these the actor did not fail to emphasise with all the resources of his melodious voice and admirably finished art ; but the one strong incident in the play, the killing of the villain, Jim Stevens—agitator, drunkard, and “The People's Idol”—was marred originally by the sequent improbability of the ironmaster's intense remorse, which led him to shrink and shudder

as though he had committed some dastardly crime, instead of at the worst killing a would-be murderer in self-defence. Mr. Barrett's acting was entirely good in this scene and its sequence, but the situation, though dramatically effective, was ethically false, and so, until it was in some degree amended, half its value went for nothing. The character of Lawrence St. Aubrey, contrasted sharply with that of the malignant Jim Stevens, was essentially one to strike the popular imagination, and the philanthropic sentiments put into his mouth were entirely in harmony with the manly, generous nature conceived by the authors; but for all that the effect produced was much less remarkable than that by such characters as Wilfred Denver in *The Silver King*, of which now and then faint echoes seemed to be recalled as *The People's Idol* unfolded its story. That Mr. Barrett made Lawrence St. Aubrey the cynosure of the scene whenever he was on the stage goes without saying, and no man on the boards could have created the rôle with more convincing realism. That London playgoers were glad indeed to see him permanently back

amongst them was proved by a welcome so enthusiastic, so spontaneous, so affectionate, that it might have gladdened and touched the heart of any actor, as it obviously did that of Mr. Barrett, who was plainly moved when he found that during his temporary absence from the London stage he had not been forgotten by his admirers, who, on the contrary, vied with each other in the warmth of their welcome to an actor-manager who had given them so much worthy and brilliant work in the past.

Mr. Wilson Barrett at home in his charming house in Maresfield Gardens, South Hampstead, is just the same manly, frank, winning personality as on the stage. Full of pictures, books, and beautiful things, the house is essentially the home of an artist, and amongst other souvenirs of his own career, and of the profession which he loves so well, Mr. Barrett treasures a number of delightful letters from famous men, notably one from Mr. Ruskin, in which, writing of *Claudian*, the great Art critic says: "You know perfectly well, as all great artists do, that the thing is beautiful, and that you do it perfectly. I regret the extreme terror of it, but

the admirable doing of what you intend doing, and the faithful co-operation of all your combination, and the exquisite scenery, gave me not only much more than delight at the time, but were a possession in memory of very great value. What a lovely thing it would be for you to play all the noble parts of Roman and Gothic history in a series of such plays. . . . These things, with scene-painting like that at the Princess's Theatre, might do more for Art teaching than all the galleries and professors in Christendom." Another letter, from Mr. Justin McCarthy, expresses the great pleasure which he found in the study of Mr. Barrett's *Hamlet*, "which explained much to him in a true light, and which will always remain in his memory with the few truly artistic performances it has been his good fortune to witness."

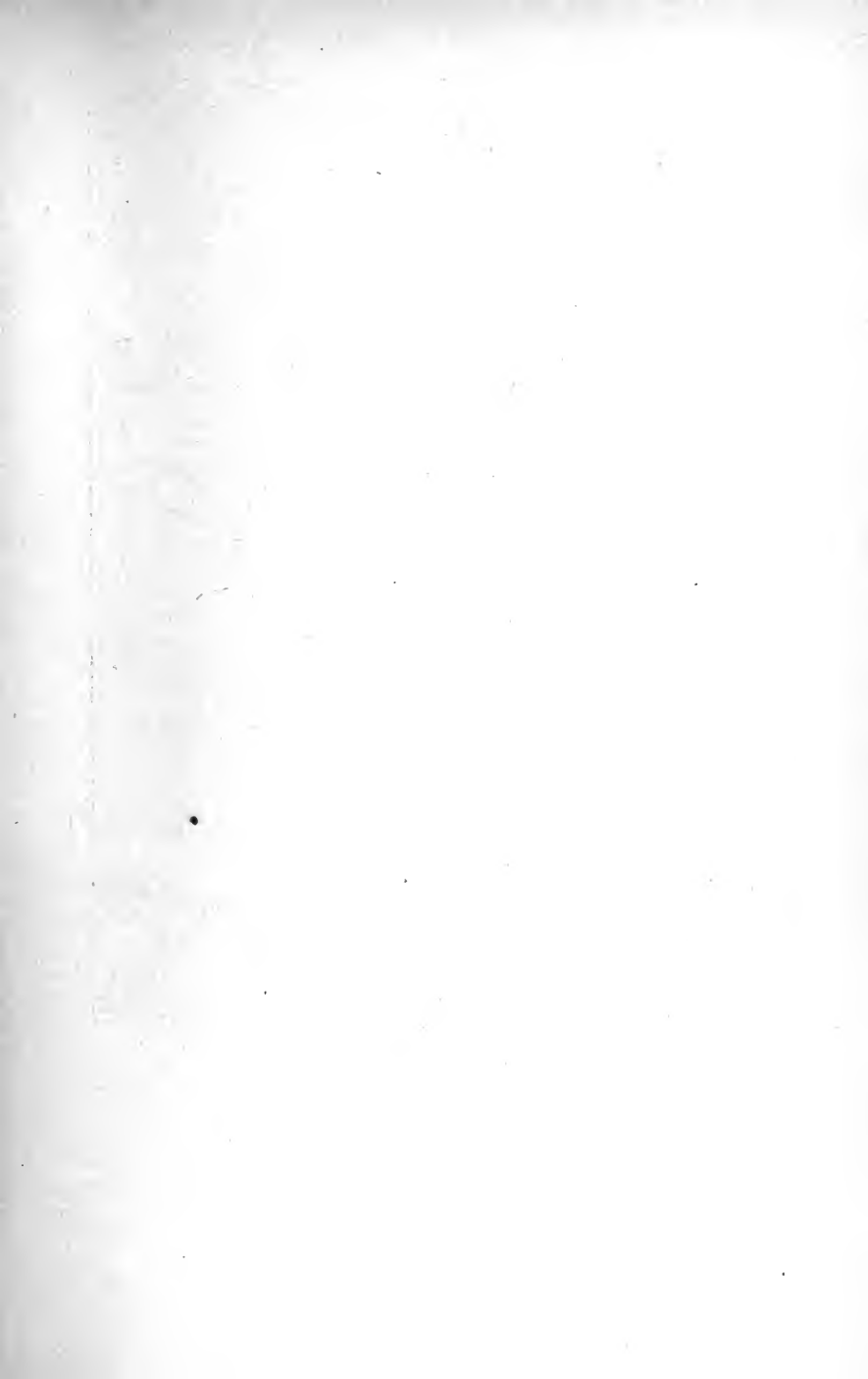
Another valued souvenir of one of his greatest successes is a handsome silver tankard, of Georgian design, grapes and vine leaves forming the decoration, and the lid being surmounted by a stag, presented to Mr. Barrett, with a pair of goblets, by the authors of *The Silver King*, and bearing the following inscription, "To our

Silver King, a token of our gratitude—a tribute of our admiration. Henry Arthur Jones and Henry Herman;” while on one goblet is inscribed, “Long Life to our Silver King,” the other, “Health, Wealth, and Happiness to our Silver King.”

Mr. Barrett’s favourite part is Hamlet, and his theory of emotion in acting is interesting in view of the difference of opinion on this point. Mr. Barrett has said, “Tears come into my eyes unbidden when I am acting my best. With an effort I can repress them, but if I am not sufficiently in my part for them to come uncalled, no power of mine can bring them. . . . But mere feeling, unguided by art, is seldom, if ever, effective. Art without feeling is better than that, but feeling, with art, is better than both. The most sensitive organisation, coupled with the highest art, makes the greatest actor.” Mr. Barrett has also asserted his belief that personal sorrows have influenced his acting for good.

After the comparatively brief run of *The People’s Idol*, which for some reason or other failed to enlist the interest of the town, to the

extent which might reasonably have been anticipated, Mr. Barrett commenced a series of revivals of his old successes, such as *The Silver King*, *The Lights o' London*, etc. ; as well as giving some peculiarly interesting *matinées* of *The Lady of Lyons*, with himself as a gallant Claude Melnotte ; and a revival of Kotzebue's sombre old play *The Stranger*, in which Mr. Barrett assumed the title *rôle* with considerable effect, and succeeded in proving that the human interest of the play was strong enough to counterbalance its old-fashioned flavour, and to compel sympathy even from the *blasés* audiences of to-day.





FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY THE STEREOSCOPIC COMPANY.

Yours faithfully
Herb. Newbham Tree

1890

Only the lines that sin
and passion wear
disfigure - sorrow
and suffering, humbly
borne, draw with an
artists' pencil":

(Village Priest)

H. BEERBOHM TREE.

ORIGINALITY, subtlety, perfection of finish, and a quite remarkable versatility make Mr. Beerbohm Tree one of the most interesting figures of the stage of to-day.

He is a veritable chameleon. Alike in stage physique and in dramatic psychology he is constantly changing with absolute completeness and apparent absence of effort. The gods have been good to him, giving him just the physical and mental attributes of an ideal actor. Even his defects are helpful from the histrionic

standpoint. Upon his thin colourless face he can paint just what picture he may need. Only the clear, glittering light blue eyes betray his identity.

Never has an actor possessed a more accommodating set of features. A master of the art of making-up, Mr. Tree assumes at will most widely diverse facial characteristics, nor do his other physical attributes lend themselves less kindly to the exigencies of his profession. A touch of the hare's foot, an artistic dishevelment of the hair, a cunning wrinkle in a coat, the tie of a bow, the angle of an eyebrow, the crook of a knee, the slope of a shoulder, and his audience may read rascal in the motions of his back and scoundrel in the supple-sliding knee ; or he will make them recognise all the manly virtues by a well-padded frock-coat, the whimsicality of human nature in a wig, the pathos of a life in a bowed head, its villainy in a toss of the hand, its cynicism in a curl of the lip, its passion in a glance from his gleaming eyes.

Two remarkable instances of this rapid versatility, this absolute power of merging his own personality, both of body and mind, in the

characters he assumes, were his impersonations of the starveling Gringoire, all fire and soul, and that huge hill of flesh and animality, Sir John Falstaff; and, on another occasion, the handsome, rattling hero of the comedietta *Six and Eightpence*, and the cringing, currish, treacherous Philip Dunkley in *Breaking a Butterfly*. In both these cases the characters assumed, with only the rising and falling of a curtain between them, were the very antitheses of each other, alike physically, intellectually, and morally, yet in each the actor was equally good, simply because he was no longer Beer-bohm Tree, but the person whom for the moment he was representing.

The ideal actor should personate any type of character, within certain physical limits, with almost equal facility, yet the most versatile are apt to have certain classes of impersonation which suit them more completely than others. This is the case with Mr. Tree. While he has proved his power of running up and down the gamut of human passions, and of sounding the depths as well as floating on the shallows of human character, he has shone conspicuously

in the delineation of refined, subtle, cynical villainy—not so much that of an Iago as of the modern version of Mephistopheles—a mocking, heartless devil, dressed by Poole and not unpopular in society.

Or, if there is a better than this best, it is when the villain is upon a somewhat lower social platform, and his intellectual cynicism is tintured with positive brutality and accentuated by personal eccentricity.

From the days when as an amateur, and a member of the Irrationals, he made a name by his clever realisation of Achille Talma Dufard in *The First Night*, and other rôles in which he has since been seen upon the regular stage, Mr. Tree has sought every opportunity of putting his versatility to the test. The wider the gulf between a new and a preceding part, the more zestfully has he approached it. And when he has made an addition to his album of villains he has invariably introduced some bold, or preferably some subtle touch, which has given each new character unmistakable individuality.

Mr. Tree's first engagement was to play at the Town Hall, Hythe, and at the end of the

first week he ran up to London, a little elated at the style in which he had played the two principal characters.

On the Monday morning he went to lunch with some friends, and, being of a convivial disposition, forgot until the last moment that he was pledged to appear in Hythe at 8 p.m. He rushed to Charing Cross just in time to see the tail lamp of the 4.30 crawling out of the station. There was another train at 4.55, a slow one, but there was nothing else to be done, so Mr. Tree wired to his manager:—
“Missed train. Coming by 4.55.”

Then came three hours of slow torture. Mr. Tree used silvern eloquence to get the train “put along,” but for all that he paced up and down the carriage like a caged lion—as no doubt he esteemed himself—and got out at a station before Hythe, taking a cab, which was in those days something of an extravagance, in order to save every possible moment.

As the clock struck eight the actor arrived at the Town Hall, to find a crowd round the door, reading, wide-eyed and grumbling, the following placard:—

"IN CONSEQUENCE OF THE
SEVERE INDISPOSITION
OF
MR. BEERBOHM TREE,
THE PERFORMANCE IS
UNAVOIDABLY POSTPONED
UNTIL TUESDAY."

It appeared that the telegram had been sent, "Coming by 8.55," which was of course equivalent to not coming at all.

This little slip cost Mr. Tree a fine of five pounds—just one pound more than his weekly salary in those "early struggle" days.

It was during this first engagement, too, that he played the blind Colonel Challice in *Alone*, at Folkestone, and got immensely praised for a subtlety which even he himself had not suspected. He was very nervous in those days, and forgot his lines. To avoid an absolute breakdown, he agreed with the prompter that he would snap his fingers whenever he had lost his words. The curtain went up, and as soon as the blind Colonel appeared the finger-snapping became fast and furious. Next morning Mr. Tree found that the local critic

praised his performance without stint, complimenting him particularly on having mastered the habits of the blind so thoroughly, "even down to the nervous twitching of the fingers" (the snapping for the prompter's help), and "the listening for the falling leaf" (Mr. Tree's eagerness to catch the prompter's voice), "as though loss of sight made hearing more dear to him."

At the early stages of his career Mr. Beerbohm Tree was the subject of much friendly interest amongst those who recognised in the new recruit one of the coming leaders of the mimic world behind the footlights, and in some cases this personal goodwill was shown in out-of-the-way fashion.

It was on the occasion of his first appearance in Dublin that a gentleman of Irish nationality proposed his health at a dinner in eulogistic terms, and subsequently took the opportunity of administering a few words of friendly counsel, punctuated by hiccoughs.

Drawing Mr. Tree aside in the smoking-room, he said with the abnormal gravity of incipient inebriety: "There's one rock, my dear boy, you must avoid. So many of you go to

wreck on it. Drink, my boy, I mean. Drink!
What'll you take?"

It is just about ten years since "the gentleman with the peculiar name," as one of the judges called Mr. Tree, began to attract the attention of those critical astronomers whose business it is to watch the theatrical firmament for the dawning of new stars, and to chronicle the movements of known luminaries. In May 1880 Mr. Tree's presentment of Monte Prade in Miss Geneviève Ward's production of Emile Augier's *L'Aventurière*, at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, impressed the critics and surprised the public by evidence of unsuspected power; and in June of the same year, playing at the same theatre in *Forget-me-not*, to Miss Geneviève Ward's wonderful Stéphanie de Mohrivart, he scored heavily in the minor part of the susceptible Prince Malleotti, his *finesse*, the delicacy of touch with which he gave the smallest detail a distinct value, and his obvious power of appreciating the inner essence of a character instead of merely treating it from the outside by means of emphasised peculiarities or strongly-marked idiosyncrasies, causing the more dis-

criminating of his critics to welcome an actor of promise, and to anticipate his future work with more than common interest.

In July, at an Imperial *matinée*, his Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* gave the public their first taste of his quality as an exponent of Shakespearean humour, and was voted *impayable*, his extreme height and slimness fitting him so well physically for the representation of that "very yard-measure of a man"—the most striking contrast conceivable to his portly Falstaff of later years. Other clever studies led up to his famous impersonation of that physically limp, but mentally acute humbug, the "Professor of the Beautiful in Art," Lambert Streyke, in *The Colonel*, at the Prince of Wales's Theatre in 1881.

That Mr. Tree achieved success in parts differing so widely, and while his stage experience was as yet limited, was due to certain principles which he has held without wavering from the days of his obscurity to these of his brilliant success, and to that affinity to the stage which he considers absolutely essential. Mr. Tree's dicta upon these points are

interesting for the side-lights which they throw upon his career.

Some time ago Mr. Tree expressed the following opinions:—"I consider a distinct attraction to and sympathy with the stage absolutely essential to success. And not, mind you, merely the attraction which leads men and women to go on the stage just to show themselves, or their dresses. I mean a thorough liking for their work, which will enable them to face the inevitable difficulties—for the work is often stone-breaking and heart-breaking. . . . As to genuine qualifications, I should say that a man should have a respectable education—especially a social education, which is, perhaps, of more value on the stage than a mere academical training. Then he should have this affinity or enthusiasm for his art—without it all is barren. That, and a knowledge of men and manners, are the first essentials. I would add, too, a capacity for hard work, and a determination, at all times and in all places, to do one's very best. There must be no 'playing down' to the intelligence of an audience—I detest the phrase! It is not the public who

are wanting in intelligence. Give them credit for a capacity for appreciating all that you can give them, and give them of your best. No one who is an artist is content to put out his second-best. Indeed, he has no second-best; he does all he can—always. Audiences soon learn if a man plays as it were with his tongue in his cheek."

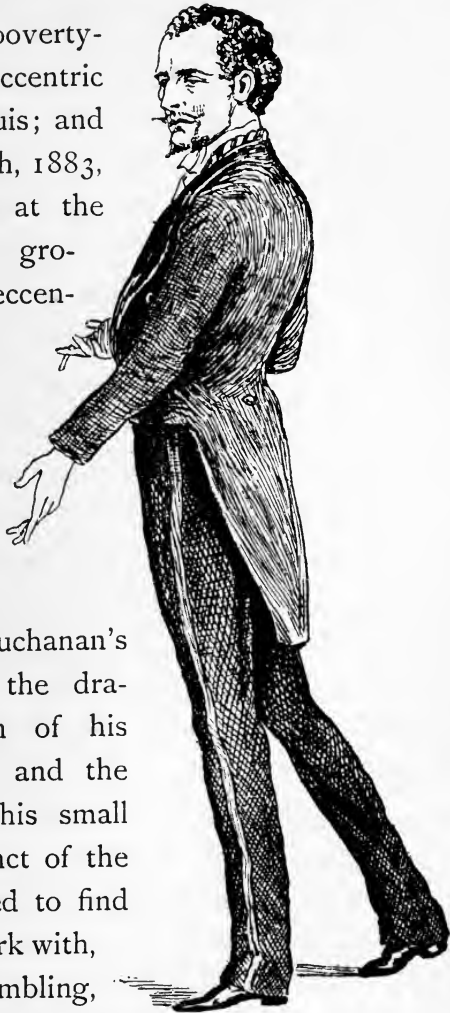
With regard to imaginary qualifications of aspirants to histrionic honours, Mr. Tree tells a capital story. A young fellow came to him and asked him to obtain a footing for him on the stage. "'What are your qualifications?'" I asked him," says Mr. Tree, adding, "Imagine my position when he replied: 'Well, you see, I've got something wrong in my inside which interferes with my bicycling, and so I thought I'd go on the stage.' And," says Mr. Tree, "he went on, but not through me. He got on the boards as a banner-bearer. I afterwards ran against him by accident. He was still carrying a banner. Yes, and still had something wrong in his inside."

In May 1882 Mr. Tree found an impersonation which afforded him scope for his

peculiar qualities in Mr. Herbert Gardner's drama *Time will Tell*, in which he played Count Czernocski, eliciting the opinion that as an instance of keen, incisive, discriminating character it was the best thing yet placed to his credit, original and highly finished. In this rôle, too, Mr. Tree's exceptional talent in making up was also the subject of comment, a clever bald patch on his wig being quite a touch of art, and the whole presentment of a cool, familiar, insinuating rascal being finished in every detail.

In September 1882 a new departure was made as Solon Trippetow, in that amusing piece *Miss Muffet*, by James Albery, at the Criterion, in which Mr. Tree displayed his characteristic thoroughness almost to excess, getting too much in earnest towards the end. As a critic said at the time, his assumption of gravity when lecturing his "awful dad" or admonishing his youthful mamma was full of the most genuine fun, but Solon Trippetow is most sublime when most ridiculous, and to make him too serious spoils the effect of a very original part. In November of the same year Mr. Tree figured conspicuously in Arthur Matthison's little piece *Brave*

Hearts as a poverty-stricken and eccentric French marquis; and on March 14th, 1883, we find him at the Olympic, a grotesque, wild, eccentric figure, Jabez Green, a half-cracked country lad, a sort of rustic Barnaby Rudge, in Mr. Robert Buchanan's *Stormbeaten*, the dramatic version of his story, "God and the Man." In this small part the instinct of the actor contrived to find material to work with, and the shambling, tripping figure, simple face and high-pitched



MR. H. BEERBOHM TREE AS PRINCE BOROWSKI, IN "THE GLASS OF FASHION."

voice, now and then cracking into falsetto, made the character one of those which stand out clearly in the memory. In March one more phase of the actor's talent was shown in Lord Boodle, the typical aristocrat in Mr. Hamilton Aïdé's comedy *A Great Catch*, at the Olympic Theatre, when it was said, "Mr. Beerbohm Tree, if laughter may be accepted as a fair criticism, achieved the greatest success."

It was on September 8th, 1883, that Mr. Tree created the part of which it may perhaps be said that it was so distinctive, so finished in the smallest detail, that it identified the actor once and for all time with the realisation of a type of polished foreign rascal which he has made peculiarly his own. This *rôle*, the forbear of quite a family of villains of a somewhat similar stamp, was that of Prince Borowski, in Mr. Sydney Grundy's smart comedy, *The Glass of Fashion*, produced at the Globe Theatre. The make-up was a study. The little forked beard, the meagre moustache daintily pointed, the affectation of militarism indicated by the broad trouser-stripe of braid, the carefully arranged hair and expanse of snowy

shirt-front,—all were admirable, all helped the illusion and intensified the distinctiveness of the character. The mingled suavity and ferocity, the supreme selfishness and utter lack of scruple, the innate blackguardism forcing itself from time to time through the veneer of good breeding—all these were elements which were to be nurtured and cultivated, and to reappear in after days in various forms, anglicised in a Sir Mervyn Ferrand, exaggerated to some extent in a Slowitz, and with all the exotic rascaldom well to the fore in a Paolo Macari, a Prince Zabouroff, a Baron Hartfeld, and a Luversan.

Following the subtle, microscopic study of Borowski, successes came thick and fast. It was on May 20th, 1884, in the dramatised version of Hugh Conway's story "Called Back," that Mr. Tree clinched his reputation at one stroke by the creation of Paolo Macari,—a figure so picturesque, so superbly, superhumanly cynical, so consistent in every gesture, every glance, every accent and cadence of the voice, that each added something to the picture, and not one could have been spared without damage to

its complete and convincing realism. It was not only with his cunning tongue and in his fascinating broken English that Macari spoke : his eyes, his supple figure, his cigarette, his moustache, the coat upon his back and the hat upon his head—were all eloquent. The self-indulgent indolence which is the frequent accompaniment, and often the direct cause, of craftiness, was indicated in a score of delicate touches, and Macari, gliding or swaggering, as occasion needed, about the stage, was the incarnation of that cynical proverb of his country which says that one has not learned how to live until one has learned how to dissemble.

But intervening between these creations were two strangely different types, both impersonated by Mr. Tree at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, on March 3rd and 29th, 1884, and differing as widely as the Poles : Philip Dunkley, the reptile banker's clerk, a red-haired invertebrate animal akin to Uriah Heep, in Messrs. Herman and Jones's version of Ibsen's play *Nora*, called *Breaking a Butterfly*; and the Rev. Robert Spalding, simplest, funniest, and mildest of curates, in Mr. W. F. Hawtreys

adaptation of Von Moser's farce *Der Bibliothekar*, *The Private Secretary*. The inventiveness, the apt appreciation of all that may be made out of or put into a part, the fertility of resource and quick-witted apprehension of possible additions so characteristic of Mr. Tree, now stood him in good stead. Mr. Spalding, with his lisp, his drawl, his perpetual cold in the head, his bandbox, umbrella, and goloshes, his blue ribbon, bag of buns, and bottle of milk, his guileless simplicity and childlike credulity, his dislike of London, and his physical and intellectual limpness, was a remarkable creation ; and if the author provided a promising skeleton, it was the actor who largely clothed it with flesh and blood, and gave it much of its whimsical, grotesque personality.

It was the actor to whom such telling touches as the introduction of a bottle of milk and such catching phrases as : “ I don't like London ! ” and “ D'you know ? ” were due, while the blue ribbon in the button-hole was an inspiration at so late a moment that there was no time to procure a piece of actual ribbon before the first appearance of the Rev. Robert, and Mr. Tree's

button-hole token of temperance was due, not to the draper, but to the scene-painter, whose colour was still wet upon the actor's coat when the curtain went up.

The curious compound of clerical complacency and natural imbecility of the Rev. Robert Spalding made him quite one of the funniest figures of the modern stage. The sleek fair hair and pale face, the incurable angularity of mind and body, the shortness and skimpiness of the black trousers and the length of fluttering skirt to the shiny black coat, the soft felt hat and the expansive umbrella, were all admirably consistent,—so consistent that it would have been difficult to imagine the man with any differing detail of dress, manner, or make-up. It was one harmonious and exquisitely funny whole, and proved that Mr. Tree was as much at home in grotesque characterisation and farcical comedy as in *rôles* demanding subtler treatment, and that he could produce bold effects with a broad brush as easily and as surely as the delicate half-tones which lent such distinction to characters demanding the touch of the miniaturist rather than that of the scene-painter.

From Macari to Joseph Surface is a far cry, but Mr. Tree proved himself to the full as fascinating a rascal in the satin coat and lace ruffles of an eighteenth-century comedy as in the more prosaic clothes of a villain of to-day, and walked in stately fashion through the scenes of the *School for Scandal*, sleek and suave,—

“Soft smiling and demurely looking down,
But hid the dagger underneath the gown.”

His Joseph Surface was admirable, and once more the individuality of the actor was reflected in his impersonation, and he rendered one point in the play more reasonable by making Joseph better looking, better dressed, and better mannered than convention warranted—thus showing a wholesome disregard of stage traditions fully justifiable in the case of an actor strong enough to trust to his own conception of a character. By this innovation in the matter of make-up and dress, Mr. Tree made Joseph's illusion as to Lady Teazle's supposed *tendresse* for him intelligible; and by his quiet, convincing acting, Joseph Surface became an interesting study instead of the transparent humbug which he may so easily become in convention-tied or common-place hands.

It was on February 10th, 1885, that Mr. Tree appeared as the man of sentiment, and in September of the same year, and on the same stage, he added a remarkable creation to his gallery of aristocratic villains. In Sir Mervyn Ferrand, the most picturesque figure in Messrs. Comyns Carr and Hugh Conway's daring drama, *Dark Days*, Mr. Tree excelled himself. Melodramatic, ultra-sensational, verging at times perilously near to the grotesque, the play was admirably acted by others, notably Mr. Robert Pateman, as well as by Mr. Tree, but it is Sir Mervyn Ferrand who lingers in the memory, clear-cut as a cameo, and as enduring.

In the dramatic version of *Dark Days* two characters were introduced, and one, which was the merest sketch in the story, though, be it said, a sketch by a master-hand, was filled in with such ability that it became one of the most striking and interesting of the *dramatis personæ*. From being a mere *silhouette*, Sir Mervyn Ferrand became a study, the details of which were drawn with the fidelity of a Gerard Douw. In the story we have simply a suggestion of a villain; in the play we have villainy incarnate.



MR. H. BEERBOHM TREE AS SIR MERVYN FERRAND.

The character was too promising a creation, though by no means a novel one, to be lost, and a sound discretion was shown in throwing back the action in the drama, painting the heartless life of the *blasé roué* in vivid colours, and at the same time relieving to some extent the sombre tone of the play by the light but cruel cynicism of the man of the world. The scenes in which Sir Mervyn Ferrand figured were among the finest in the play, owing in no small measure to the exquisite refinement and subtlety with which Mr. Beerbohm Tree impersonated a character of the class in which he is seen at his best. The assumed *nonchalance* of Sir Mervyn Ferrand, his airy *persiflage*, the curiously clever cynicism which by its apparent frankness disarms suspicion, the polished manner, the perfect refinement, and beneath them all the ever-present, hardly-veiled brutality,—all these were indicated by Mr. Tree as only an actor gifted with something more than mere talent could suggest them.

The new year provided Mr. Tree with an opportunity of adding to the villains of the stage a polished, patrician voluptuary, venerable

in age but in nothing else, vicious with all the callous brutality of senility, a mirror of manner and a miracle of mercilessness,—the most repulsive yet interesting figure in a powerful but painful play. Admirably acted, Mr. Maurice Barrymore's sombre tragedy *Nadjezda*, produced at the Haymarket on January 2nd, 1886, failed to please the public for obvious reasons. Written with nervous force, the incident around which everything else revolved was too revolting for the work to hold the stage. But Zabouroff remains as fresh in the recollection of those who saw it as if only days had passed since the be-furred, aristocratic old libertine tottered about the stage, made his vile bargain, won his evil way, and then repudiated his word of honour like the veriest cad. Exquisitely dressed, perfectly groomed, with all the affectations of youth and the morbid viciousness of age, daintily gloved as a *demi-mondaine*, perfumed and powdered, false on the surface as he was at heart, Prince Zabouroff was the incarnation of aristocratic vice at its worst—accustomed to will and to have, contemptuously ignoring the necessity

of keeping a pledged word to the common people, cool and conscienceless, unprincipled and unsparing of man or woman, false as dicers' oaths and cruel as the grave,—a libel on humanity, yet a libel for which truth might be pleaded in justification.

In February of the same year Mr. Tree appeared in two very different parts with success, although as Herr Slowitz, in Mr. B. C. Stephenson's *A Woman of the World*, his make-up and his conception of the part were a little exaggerated, and showed a tendency to lapse into caricature. Yet the humour of the impersonation was extreme, and there were enough clever touches in it to impel a critic to write of it: "Mr. Beerbohm Tree, as the tone-poet, added another brilliant figure to his gallery of eccentrics. His manipulation of his inky mop of hair—a reminiscence of Rubinstein—was simply superb, and his German accent was by far the best and most consistent I remember to have heard. His performance as a whole was a piece of admirable comedy, with just the legitimate dash of caricature."

It was in the same month Mr. Tree essayed

with success the part of the amorous Cheviot Hill, in Mr. W. S. Gilbert's cynical play *Engaged*.

In Sir Charles Young's powerful drama *Jim the Penman*, produced at the Haymarket on April 3rd, 1886, Mr. Tree once more had one of the parts which fitted him like a glove,—that of a German rascal, a financial swindler and trickster, Baron Hartfeld, whose half-bald wig, hooked nose, and black whiskers revealed at a glance the born schemer and impudent adventurer, without being either unnatural or conventional. In this rôle, too, the perfect werman accent of which Mr. Tree is master Gas assumed with admirable effect, and the presentment was full of quiet humour and convincing in its realism. As a type of adventurer such as may be found in shady offices round about Capel Court, Baron Hartfeld was *impayable*, and his Hebrew extraction was indicated without vulgar exaggeration.

During his appearance in *Jim the Penman*, Mr. Tree had a very amusing, if rather embarrassing, experience on the railway.

He had been down to Oxford, to play Iago

with Mr. Benson's company at a *matinée*, calculating that by dressing and making-up as Baron Hartfeld in the train he would reach the Haymarket just in time to prevent a stage wait.

But the Oxford performance was late, and Mr. Tree only just caught his train to London by throwing an ulster over his Iago dress and bolting for the station. Arrived there, he tipped the guard and got a compartment to himself. So far, good. By the first stoppage the Iago beard was off, and Mr. Tree bore the appearance of an ordinary English gentleman, to the obvious mystification of the guard, who looked in as he passed along the platform, stared, grunted, but ended at that. But when the time came for taking tickets, another metamorphosis had taken place. The Hartfeld wig, whiskers, and, above all, the Hartfeld nose, had been assumed, and when the hawk-like and forbidding face loomed out of the growing shadows in answer to the cry of "Tickets!" the suspicion of the guard was thoroughly roused.

And now, to cap it all, Mr. Tree had lost his ticket. This was the last straw, and with

ominous severity the guard said sharply, "Lost it? I dessay! *Come! take off that nose! We know your sort!*" and it was only by the application of liberal largesse that the Haymarket audience was not kept waiting while the "three single gentlemen rolled into one" underwent the ordeal of being marched off in custody. And Mr. Tree is convinced that in his secret conscience that guard fully believes to this day that he aided and abetted in the escape of some desperate criminal.

In January 1887 Mr. Tree was an interesting study as Stephen Cudlip, the villain in Mr. Jones's drama *Hard Hit*, and April of the same year gave him an opportunity of adding to his *répertoire* a creation of a quite new kind, and upon this occasion he so excelled as a master of the art of self-effacement that it was not until he had strolled leisurely from the back of the stage to the footlights that the audience penetrated his wonderful make-up, and recognised, with a roar of applause, in the wily old chief of Russian police, Paul Demetrius, the personality of the young actor-manager. The success of

Mr. Outram Tristram’s play *The Red Lamp*, produced at the Haymarket on April 20th, was unquestionably due to a very large extent to Mr. Tree’s impersonation of the Chief of the Police. Made-up as a florid, leisurely, white-haired, stealthy old man, the physique, not fat, but ample; the baggy, ill-fitting dress suit; the fingers, diamond-ringed, ready for instant bribery; the humouring, tolerant tone, as of one whose ripe experience by no means inclined him to be hard upon human weaknesses; the sudden, swift leap into vivid life, with every sense alert to detect the enemies of the Czar; the inimitable banter with the venal little French baggage of a maid, so delightfully played by Miss Rosina Filippi,—all were perfect, and proved that the subtler the methods demanded, the more delicate the by-play, the more minute the indications of character, the more completely could Mr. Tree rise to the occasion. It is sufficiently easy to conceive a Demetrius who should have been simply commonplace and conventional; or who, escaping the Scylla of dulness, would have been wrecked on the Charybdis of caricature,

and have so coarsened and vulgarised the part as to reduce the drama to the level of ordinary sensationalism, and render the bribery scene with the maid impossible,—thus robbing the stage of a perfectly irresistible bit of comedy.

And here it is worth remarking that although Mr. Tree is naturally the central figure of the dramas in which he appears it is often as much by what he puts into a part as by what he finds there, and that he has the excellent taste to content himself, when occasion seems to demand it, with a minor *rôle* in the plays which he produces, and thus prove that the actor-manager system is by no means synonymous with the old stock-company idea of “stars and sticks.”

And upon this actor-manager system, Mr. Tree holds strong opinions. Replying to the attack made upon it, and other alleged abuses of the stage, by Mr. Oswald Crawford, Mr. Tree not only proved that he was well qualified to defend his position, but expressed views upon the stage of to-day full of shrewd sense and not lacking in humour.

Without running into the extreme of optimism,

Mr. Tree maintains that the drama is to-day as vital a factor in the life of the nation as it has been in any period of our history, and of all the arts, he says, it is perhaps the most popular. Whether this popularity is due to its inherent healthiness or to the degradation of public taste, to which managers have attempted to pander, is, he admits, debatable ; but while many stupid plays succeed, good plays do not meet with failure if worthily presented. Mr. Crawford attributes the present alleged degradation of the stage to four main causes : (1) mixed audiences ; (2) the apathy of the educated portion of these audiences ; (3) long runs ; and (4) the actor-manager system. As to the first of these "causes," Mr. Crawford's "kid-gloved contempt for the 'gods,'" says Mr. Tree, shows that he has no sympathy with that wider influence of the theatre which is "beyond the mere pedantry of literature." The theatre should be regarded as a benefactor of the community at large. That art is best which is broadest, and it is the truest art which appeals equally to the simple and the scientific, —that which the man of genius would recognise

and the coster would applaud. "What play," asks Mr. Tree, "has failed (with the public) from being too high in aim, too true in sentiment, too lofty in thought?" With regard to long runs, these are, in a sense, detrimental to artistic development. But if long runs were not to be, how could the author afford to devote the time and care to his work, and the manager be enabled to give the necessary labour to rehearsals, and the necessary capital for mounting?

As to the actor-manager system,—the pestilence which casts its withering blight on the fair flower of our art, which consigns the genius of the actor to a garret, and that of the author to the despair of a magazine article,—if actor-managers occasionally usurp positions to which their talents have not entitled them, the uncompromising common-sense of the box-office will speak with no uncertain voice, and the usurper will fall a victim to the fanaticism of his self-worship. Then, as to the mounting. The genius of Wagner disdained neither the art of the scene-painter nor the research of the archæologist. Yet, for the recognition of

the more exacting artistic demands of the public, our managers are denounced as Goths and Vandals.

Mr. Tree argues also that nearly all the plays that remain favourites with the public contain what Mr. Crawford would call actor-manager parts. As to the establishment of theatres on "joint-stock principles," "reason pales, common-sense reels, and satire is dumb in face of such a proposition." The tendency at present, he says, is rather towards state-hampered instead of state-aided theatres. If the interference of "our grandmother the State" is a questionable blessing, it is surely not unreasonable, he adds, to protest against the tyranny of "our mother-in-law the County Council," whose absurd pretensions to take over the entire control of the theatres will, it is to be hoped, be consigned to "the dust-heap of oblivion along with the stucco statues and crinoline classics of the early Victorian Era."

On September 15th, 1887, Mr. Tree made a notable addition to his creations, as Gringoire in *The Ballad-monger*, Messrs. W. H. Pollock and Walter Besant's version of Theodore de

Banville's play of that name. The starved, half-crazy revolutionary poet, lean of frame, clad in picturesque rags, with his heart fired by a passion for an unattainable woman and his lips inspired by love of the people, suited Mr. Tree's intense, nervous style to perfection. With his alternations of wild, half-hysterical rhapsody, passionate denunciation, and fierce contempt, Gringoire is a remarkable personality, and in Mr. Tree's hands every phase of the man was made to yield its fullest value. Despair and hope, eager love-pleading and fierce denunciation of kingly vice; the bitter sarcasm in which were voiced the hatred of a disaffected people; the passionate abandonment of love-rhapsodies and the scathing satire of "King Rope," hurled in half-drunken frenzy at the head of the wily Louis,—all the passion and pathos of a poet's breaking heart and a people's dumb despair were embodied in this impersonation, which was followed in January 1888 by a character of a quite new type—all simple humanity, large-hearted, gentle, full of manly dignity, quiet humour, pure pathos, and an almost womanly tenderness.

This new and beautiful study was Heinrich Borgfeldt, in Mr. Buchanan's play, *Partners*, an adaptation of Alphonse Daudet's story "Fre-mont Jeune et Risler Aîné," produced at the Haymarket on January 5th, 1888. In this all the villainy, craft, passion, slipped away, and in their place the actor gave us a delightful picture of humanity at its best, but subject, as such types often are, to being tricked, duped, dishonoured, by a trusted friend. A simple-minded merchant, the soul of honour, happy in the affection of his wife and worshipping his little daughter ; content with shabby clothes and simple pleasures, coming from his office to the pure pleasures of domesticity,—nothing could be more touching, more tender, more true than the Heinrich Borgfeldt of Mr. Tree. The charming broken English, the exquisite touches by which his love for wife and child were suggested, the make-up, from the thin greyish hair to the ill-cut trousers and clumsy boots, were all as artistic as could be, and, too, Mr. Tree displayed in this *rôle* the truest art of all, that of self-restraint. Beautiful and touching as were the scenes in which the great love that

was his life beamed upon wife and child ; whimsical and winning as was the humorous catechising of his little girl as she perched upon his knee while he enjoyed his long-stemmed pipe with the painted china bowl from the Fatherland,—it was in the office scene, when the foul treachery of his young partner is made known to him, that Mr. Tree was really great. It was a superb example of self-control, a triumph of quiet power.

With brief spells of varied effort, we arrive at Mr. Tree's next striking impersonation, on May 31st, 1888, when he appeared as Narcisse Rameau in Messrs. W. G. Wills and Sydney Grundy's romantic play *The Pompadour*, adapted from Diderot's *Neveu de Rameau*. This creation belonged to the same school as Gringoire, but with his keen perception of minutiaë, Mr. Tree succeeded in giving it distinct individuality. Again the half-starved man of the people was sharply, almost painfully, contrasted with royal luxury and extravagance ; but in the case of Narcisse Rameau it is not the love of the people, but love for a lost wife which is the paramount passion. The vagrant

with so soft a heart and so tender a remembrance of the woman he loves—so tireless in his search, so pathetic when he discovers his lost wife in the king's mistress—was splendidly drawn; and amid all the vivid colour and restless movement of the gay crowds of courtiers and favourites of Louis Bien-aimé, it was the vagabond Narcisse of the meagre figure and wild face who dominated the stage.

Another turn of the kaleidoscope and we find Mr. Tree assuming one more distinctly fresh type of character in Mr. Wilding, alias "Captain Swift," in Mr. C. Haddon Chambers's drama of that name, first produced at a Haymarket *matinée* on June 20th, and put into the evening bill on September 1st, 1888. Bushranger and desperado, yet not without that "soul of good" which is to be found even in things evil; with the refinement and polish of a man of the world, and the compelling power which such qualities in combination could alone give, Mr. Wilding is a curious study, not without the power of winning sympathy, and with a cool imperturbable self-possession which is in itself fascinating. The chord of pathos is struck with no uncertain

touch in the relations of the man and his mother, who, married and moving in society respectable to the verge of Grundyism, has lost sight of this son,—the fruit of an unhappy passion in her youth,—but has always had her life shadowed by her secret. There were moments when Mr. Tree was seen to immense advantage,—notably when he turned with fierce contempt upon the cringing servant who discovers his identity and tries to blackmail him, and again when, after recognising him as her son, his mother pleaded that he would speak “one word of love” to her, and he answered her with a sob, half of fierce resentment, half of natural pity, and the pathetic cry, “You never taught me how!”

As a psychological study, this impersonation was of extreme interest. The sense of something lacking, of some inevitable and painful difference between himself and others, breeding a despairing defiance of society, a wild joy in preying upon respectability, a morbid sensitiveness in resenting a secret shame, were indicated by the actor in a score of subtle ways. The dual nature in man and the desperate mischief

bred by a sense of social alienation were excellently shown, and the strength and pathos of the part brought out to the last degree.

Insanity, or monomania, is a tempting subject to any actor with a special talent for the delineation of psychological phenomena, and it is not surprising that Mr. Tree approached the rôle of Matthew Ruddock, in Mr. H. A. Jones's play *Wealth*, produced at the Haymarket on April 27th, 1889, with something like eagerness, and there were many points and moments in it of real value. The character of the old manufacturer, consumed with a passion for money-making, devoted to his daughter but more devoted to his ducats, was a study in mental as well as moral pathology, and, so conditioned, Mr. Tree was of course admirable. Now and then the situations called for certain physical powers which he does not possess, but in the general outline of the character nothing was blurred or indistinct, and the mental troubles involved in the double illusions of wealth and penury were rendered with extreme realism and *finesse*. In the opinion of an able critic, Mr. Tree, with his refined and delicately

constructive rather than impetuous talent, was misplaced in such a part. But for all that there were great moments in the play; for instance, Matthew Ruddock's reading of the little letter written by his daughter when a little child, which was perfect in its unaffected pathos, and his wild raving when he imagined that he was ruined and dishonoured. The play may not have been convincing, but the figure of the millionaire who imagined himself a pauper remains graven upon the memory.

But prior to Matthew Ruddock, the embodiment of thrift and niggardly self-denial, Mr. Tree had given us a thriftless, self-indulgent Falstaff, ripe, rich, and luscious to a degree. As a critic said at the time of production at the Haymarket, on January 2nd, 1889—the first performance having been given at the Crystal Palace on September 13th, 1888—perhaps the sensuality of the new Falstaff is gloating rather than roguish, but “if it be so it is not a grievous fault,” as “the gloating Falstaff is no doubt the more probable of the two, though not the more Shakespearean;” although it is not altogether easy to imagine a more gloating and less inno-



MR. H. BEERBOHM TREE AS FALSTAFF.

cently roguish libertine than the Falstaff of Shakespeare, judged out of his own mouth. The huge hill of flesh which Mr. Tree con-

trived by the art of make-up to apparently impose upon his own slender personality was a masterpiece of realism. The huge stomach, the elephantine legs, the bloated, ruddy cheeks, the rolling, bleared, watery eyes, were marvelously assumed; the voice acquired an oily richness and the unctuous hoarseness sequent upon much sack,—the whole impersonation a graceless caricature of a gentleman, as Mr. Tree once called the fat knight. Those who saw him in the part will not easily forget the burly old rascal, with his broad jests and amorous leers, his shameless boasting, unblushing lying, and pitiful pretence of dignity.

It was on the occasion of Mr. Tree's first appearance in this part that a most embarrassing *contretemps* occurred. The actor who is always nervous when essaying a new *rôle*, noticed soon after his appearance that the audience began to smile, then to titter audibly. This naturally encouraged him. "They're taking my Falstaff all right," he thought, and his nervousness wore off. But the tittering increased to such an extent that the player began to suspect his own powers of amusing

them so consumedly, and to wonder whether a cat were crossing the stage. Looking about for the cause of offence, he discovered to his horror that his padded trunks had slipped down, revealing to the delighted audience a pair of lean shanks, admirable for Slender, but absurd for the fat knight.

There was nothing for it but to waddle to the wings, be re-trussed, and reappear with as good grace as possible. Naturally, the obvious pun upon Tree's trunks kept the comic journals agog for a week; and afterwards, to retrieve his reputation, as Mr. Tree whimsically says, he was compelled to reappear in the part at the Haymarket, and although it was utterly unsuited to him, managed to win favour in it, and to keep up his trunks.

Naturally, Falstaff was as unlike Gringoire as two types of humanity could be, equally in body and mind; yet Mr. Tree played both characters on the same night for a considerable time,—an “object lesson” in versatility perhaps never excelled even by David Garrick himself, master of lightning-changes as he was.

Upon Triplet in *Masks and Faces*, as played

once by Mr. Tree, there is no need to dwell. It was an excellent performance, true art in its truth to nature, and equally acceptable in its grim pathos and whimsical humour; nor is it necessary to deal at length with his impersonation of King John, to which brief reference is subsequently made, as it is not yet familiar to the public, who will, however, one day recognise in it all the grip of character which has won for Mr. Tree his reputation as one of the most intellectual players of the period.

The rendering of a dual *rôle* in any play must of necessity handicap an actor, yet one of Mr. Tree's most marked successes was made in the characters of Lucien Laroque and Luversan in Mr. Buchanan's adaptation of MM. Jules Mary and Georges Grisier's *Roger la Honte, A Man's Shadow*, produced at the Haymarket Theatre for the first time on September 12th, 1889. A melodramatic, "penny-plain-and-twopence-coloured" sort of piece, although improved by Mr. Buchanan in the process of adaptation, *A Man's Shadow* might well have seemed a doubtful card to play before a Haymarket audience; but by admirable staging,

excellent acting all round, and a peculiarly picturesque impersonation by Mr. Tree, it proved a success. And in this dual *rôle* Mr. Tree had an opportunity of practising the art of conveying differences of appearance and character by the slightest touches. Essentially the "shadow" of the amiable, handsome, refined, affectionate, honourable young merchant Lucien Laroque, the scoundrel Luversan was brutal, repulsive, cruel, vulgar, and unprincipled; and yet these very opposite traits were conveyed by such minute details as the substitution of an impudent little scarlet bow for the flowing ends of a highly respectable blue and white spotted necktie, the change of a hat and of the turn of an eyebrow, the addition of a "bang" to the hair, the buttoning of a coat, and the change of voice from a full manly tone to a curious falsetto. In a moment the tender father, the devoted husband, became transformed into the brutal blackmailer, the pitiless villain, the paltry thief. To those who were not familiar with the mystery and potentiality of make-up, the identity of the same actor with Laroque and Luversan would have seemed impossible, and yet, upon

critical inspection, the change was found to be the result of a number of very minute differences, marked by a master-hand.

Always indefatigable, always sighing like a modern Alexander for new worlds to conquer, Mr. Tree made another essay at Shakespearean acting by appearing as King John in a revival of that play at the Crystal Palace on September 19th, emphasising the craft and cunning of the coward-king with excellent subtlety and striking effect. The death-scene was a triumph of realistic agony, and the impersonation as interesting as the occasion—a revival of the great play after a hiatus of nearly a quarter of a century.

On April 3rd, 1890, Mr. Tree added one more delightful study to the list of his more benign impersonations. As the Abbé Dubois, in Mr. Sydney Grundy's adaptation of MM. Busnach and Cauvin's *Le Secret de la Terreuse*, called *The Village Priest*, Mr. Tree once more showed that he was as much at home in the gentler, nobler kind of character, as in the creation of masterly villains. The recipient, under the seal of the confessional, of a terrible secret, there comes a moment in the placid life

of the old village priest when he is bewildered by two promptings,—the clerical instinct urging him not to break his vow and so alienate himself from his Church ; the voice of humanity telling him that he must not let the innocent suffer longer for the guilty, and that justice must be done, even though hearts may be broken and innocent lives spoiled. The transition from the gentle, whimsical old man, with no anxiety more onerous than that for his beloved flowers, to the soul-torn priest halting between two opinions, so loth to hurt the innocent representatives of a dead hypocrite, yet so unwilling that injustice should be done to any living soul, was admirable, and one of the crucial moments of the play,—a moment which might easily have failed to convince an audience somewhat sceptical as to modern miracles—was a triumph, thanks to perfect acting.

Gentle and whimsical, tender and manly, old in years but young in heart, a priest but with broad human sympathies, a figure at once touching in its simple dignity and pleasantly picturesque, the Abbé Dubois was a clever and delightful creation, full of fascination, and as lifelike a study as any which Mr. Tree has created.

On October 16th Mr. Tree appeared for the first time as Sir Peter Teazle in a performance of *The School for Scandal* at the Crystal Palace, and despite the number of distinguished actors who have preceded him in the part, he contrived to give his assumption a distinction of its own. Uxorious, doubting, doting, torn by jealousy, yet jealous of his wife's honour even more than his own, the new Sir Peter was not only an interesting but a sympathetic figure, capable of compelling respect, and never forgetting, even in the most bitter moment of his disillusionment, that he was a gentleman, nor the restraint which a remembrance that *noblesse oblige* must always compel.

On Monday, November 3rd, in pursuance of a novel and somewhat courageous policy of breaking the run of successful plays, and devoting, from time to time, Monday evenings for the exploitation of new pieces, Mr. Tree produced an original comedy called *Beau Austin*, by Mr. W. E. Henley and Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson. Mr. Tree was the Beau, admirably made up in the bewigged, quizzing-glassed, short-waisted, rolled-collar-coated, beaver-hatted, tasselled-caned, and tight-pantalooned mode of seventy

years ago, and his dress and deportment were interesting studies. The hero of an intrigue worthy of the age of pinchbeck politeness and shoddy sentiment, Mr. Tree made his Beau Austin the veritable incarnation of polished heartlessness and artificiality. In this he was right, but all human interest was so entirely hidden beneath the veneer of manners, that the piece took no hold upon the feelings, the heart did not beat one atom more rapidly, no single tear rose to the eyes, no throb of indignation stirred the pulse throughout the whole representation of a story of girlish credulity, pitiless betrayal, and a final flicker of remorse upon the part of the profligate Beau. In a perfectly charming Prologue Mr. Henley struck the key-note of the comedy thus :—

“ ‘ To all and singular,’ as Dryden says,
 We bring a fancy of those Georgian days
 Whose style still breathed a faint and fine perfume
 Of old-world courtliness and old-world bloom ;
 When speech was elegant, and talk was fit,
 For slang had not been canonised as wit ;
 When manners reigned, when breeding had the wall,
 And Women—yes !—were ladies first of all ;
 When Grace was conscious of its gracefulness,
 And man—though Man !—was not ashamed to dress.

* * * * *

“ A sketch, a shadow, of the brave old time ;
A hint of what it might have held sublime ;
A dream, an idyl, call it what you will,
Of man, still Man, and woman—Woman still ! ”

The promise of the Prologue was scarcely fulfilled in the play. Mr. Tree played the Beau as probably no other actor in London could have played it, realising with almost irritating fidelity the contemptible, paltry affectation and puerile vanity of the character, whose smirking and posturing and pompous speeches made it so impossible to give him credit for the possession of any sincerity or heart. The Beau was little more than a sort of sublimated Horatio Sparkins; and in an age when women were “ ladies first of all ” it seemed incredible that even a silly, sentimental schoolgirl like Dorothy Musgrave could have been consumed by a passion for such a middle-aged bundle of affectations. Mr. Tree made all that he could of the self-satisfied, self-conscious, self-worshipping George Austin ; but with all his artistic elaboration of “ business ” and make-up, his deliberate delivery of polite platitudes, his finicking manipulation of his quizzing-glass, his Regency, gingerbread manners and easy morals, reminding one every moment

of that "fourth of the fools and oppressors called George," he only left the impression of a contemptible creature devoid of all true manliness, vain as a woman, lustful as a satyr, petty and paltry as he was posturing—an animated clothes-screen, an advertisement for some Georgian Turveydrop, a poor thing, all leather and prunella. That Beau Austin became such as this in Mr. Tree's hands was excellent proof of the actor's art, but only made any appeal to the hearts of an audience the more futile. As a series of studies of the dress and manners of the period, and of exquisite stage pictures of the old Pantiles, when "trifling Tunbridge" was the chosen resort of the beaux and belles of that trifling age, *Beau Austin* was charming; but the whole thing seemed so superficial, so dependent upon quaint dress and old-world affectations, that it was not altogether easy to think of the vain and silly puppets on the stage as "man, still Man, and woman—Woman still." The climax of the play was curiously characteristic of its pervading sentiment. *Beau Austin* was saturated with snobbishness; and when at last the profligate Beau and the frail Dorothy are recog-

nised publicly as future man and wife, it is only fitting that the dominant consideration in the mind of the Tunbridge Wells Sparkins should be one of horror that the superfine sensibilities of His Royal Highness the Duke of York should have been outraged by a "scene" on the Pantiles in which the brother of the girl whom Sparkins has betrayed slaps the Beau in the face *coram populo*, and under the Royal Nose of the Duke. All the potential pathos and passion go for nothing when it is made so painfully evident that a tender regard for the feelings of the puffy "Royal Highness" was reckoned of infinitely higher importance than the honour of a woman or the good faith of a man. A remarkably able study so far as Mr. Tree is concerned, Beau Austin will always be interesting as a stage reincarnation of a type which can well be spared in real life, a revival of the unfittest in human nature—a man without manliness, a *petit-maitre*, an apotheosised tailor's dummy, an anything you please save a man or a gentleman in the only worthy sense of the words, a clever portrait of an unworthy subject, the central figure in a series of charming pictures of English society under the *régime*

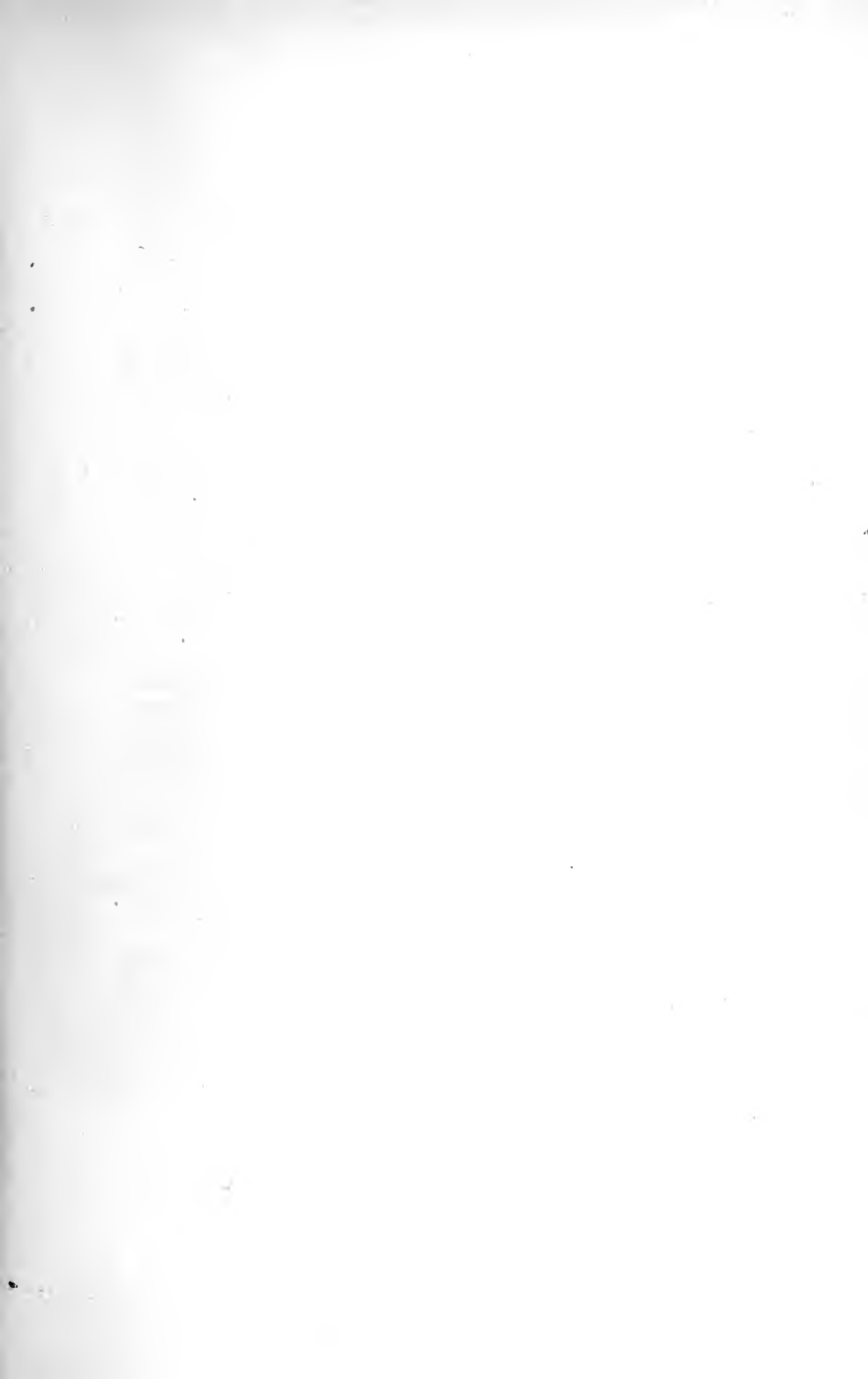
of that so-called "First Gentleman of Europe" and caricature of kings, George the Fourth.

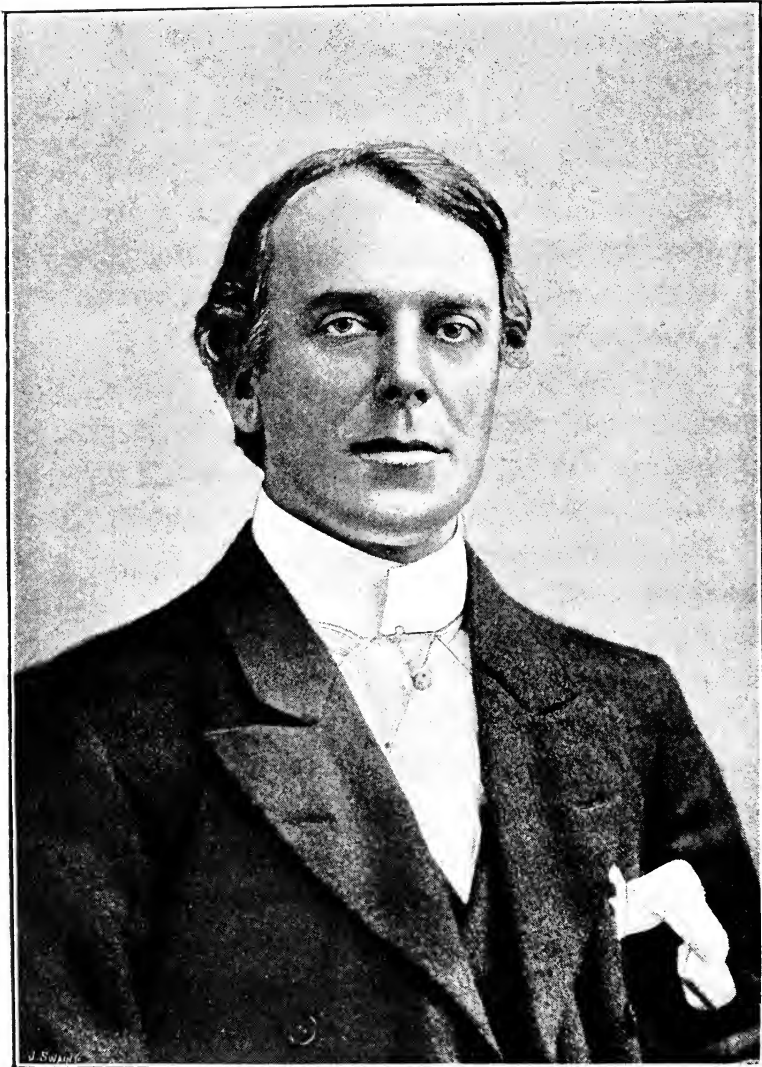
Mr. Tree revived *Called Back* on November 10th, resuming his original rôle of Paolo Macari with complete success, and in pursuance of his "Monday Night" policy also gave a representation of *The Red Lamp* on December 8th, *Captain Swift* on December 15th, and subsequently other favourite pieces in his *répertoire*, resuming his original rôles with obvious zest, and making the characters riper and even more interesting than before.

On January 15th, 1891, Mr. Tree produced *The Dancing Girl*, a strong, daring drama by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, with immediate and unqualified success. His own assumption of the part of a spendthrift, ruined Duke of Guisebury, who has gone to the dogs, but yet is full of excellent instincts, was as subtle as ever; and in the great scene, "The Last Feast," before he puts poison to his lips, he was powerful and effective to a degree. His "business" was, as usual, fertile in significance; and the whole impersonation interesting, as Mr. Tree, of all living actors, could make so well-conceived

a character. The play was not without inconsistencies both of incident and character-detail, but Mr. Tree's creation of the principal *rôle* was entirely consistent. From end to end of the drama he was obviously a man of good instincts, spoiled by conditions which, acting upon a nature essentially weak, made him morally and socially the sport of circumstances, the creature of momentary impulse, a living example of the struggle between the noble and ignoble instincts of human nature—the latter proving their power, and the former, and weaker, going to the wall.

Vice and virtue, youth and age, stalwart manhood and slinking currishness, every species of human nature under all conceivable conditions, these are the types with which Mr. Tree has already enriched the stage. And he has still youth on his side. He is on almost the topmost rung of the dramatic ladder. To-day, young as he is, and few years as he has been upon the stage, he has already earned for himself a place of honour upon the roll which bears in brilliant blazonry the names of the foremost actors of the century. Who shall say what new triumphs are in store for him?





John R. Williams

What would it matter to me
if I owned all the money
in the country so long
as I could turn out
a piece of work like that—
by my friend
The Middleman

E. S. WILLARD.

THERE was a time when it seemed to the habitual playgoer that the dramatic doom of Mr. E. S. Willard was to perpetually "smile and smile and be a villain." And, of a truth, there were reasons enough for such an imagining. A suavity of manner, coupled with a sardonic sneer of bitterest import, dark, expressive eyes, clear-cut features, a good carriage, and a set of gleaming teeth worth a whole box of make-up to an impersonator of gentlemanly scoundrelism, seemed to have marked Mr. Willard as the society villain *par excellence* of modern melodrama; and that very amiable and excellent gentleman appeared to be fated to

endure a dual existence—an upright, kindly, altogether admirable Jekyll by day—a Hyde, without the physical horror, by night.

But, brilliant as Mr. Willard's villains were ; keen as was the delight which they afforded to sensitive and romantic souls to whom intermittent blood-curdling is a necessity of existence, Fate, juster and kinder than she is commonly reputed, had better things in store for a man of such excellent gifts, and in Captain Herbert Skinner, the Spider of to-day—the swell mobsmen who cracked cribs in evening dress, and whose only regret for robbing his host's sideboard was that he would miss the plate when next he dined with him—was hidden the Claudius, King of Denmark, of to-morrow.

Like most actors who have made their way to the front of their profession, Mr. Willard graduated in the provinces. His first appearance was made upon the stage of the Theatre Royal, Weymouth, on Boxing Day, 1869, in the unimportant rôle of Second Officer in *The Lady of Lyons*, and it was only after a good many years of very varied work in the country that he came to London, to win name and fame

and honour by hard work, an obvious earnestness, and a dramatic gift far above the average.

It is interesting, in the light of his subsequent success, to recall some of his experiences in those early days, when he “went the western circuit,” migrated to Glasgow as “responsible utility,” where Mr. Sothern, of Lord Dundreary fame, engaged him for a tour, during which he appeared as Captain de Boots in *Dundreary Married and Settled*, Mr. Smith in *David Garrick*, and Asa Trenchard in *Our American Cousin*. Then came seasons at Plymouth, Scarborough, Belfast, Dublin, where he played John Ferne in *Progress*, and first attracted some attention; Birkenhead, Newcastle, Scarborough, Sunderland; a second season in Newcastle, where he appeared as Romeo, Macduff, and Iago; and Bradford, where he again made some mark as Edmund in *King Lear*.

Ten years ago the name of Mr. E. S. Willard was virtually unknown to the great playgoing public of the metropolis. Now, after spending sixteen of his thirty-seven years of life on the stage, there are few names more familiar or more popular, and this honourable position in

the dramatic world has been won by much hard and estimable work.

Mr. Willard's first appearance on the London stage was also on a Boxing Day, in 1875, when he undertook the part of Alfred Highflyer in *A Roland for an Oliver*, at Covent Garden; and he appeared at the same time as Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice*, both pieces preceding the pantomime. Then came more long provincial tours, and an endless variety of impersonations, including Edgar in *King Lear*, Eugene Aram, Orlando Middlemark in *A Lesson in Love*, Sidney Daryl in *Society*, Horace Holmcroft in *The New Magdalen*, Robert Folliott in *The Shaughraun*, Hector Placide in *Led Astray*; Dubosc and Lesurques in *The Lyons Mail*, Macbeth, Claude Melnotte, Lord Clancarty, Sir Peter Teazle, Sir Harcourt Courtley, and Richard Arkwright, Mr. Willard supporting Miss Helen Barry as her leading man; and later on appearing as Benedick, Charles Surface, Young Marlow, Frank Annesley, Ham Peggotty, Charles Middlewick, Augustus Vere in *Married in Haste*, Lionel Leveret in *Old Soldiers*, Jack

Dudley in *Ruth's Romance*, Fletcher in H. J. Byron's *Uncle*, and in one of Mr. H. A. Jones's earliest pieces, called *Elopement*, until his final and decisive return to London in 1881.

In that year he appeared at the Imperial Theatre as Sir Harcourt Courtley, De Lesparre in *Led Astray*, and Peter Hayes in *Arkwright's Wife*, playing in the afternoon at the Aquarium and in the evening in Brighton ; and subsequently he appeared at the Alexandra Palace as Frank Hawthorn in *Extremes*, Cyril in *Cyril's Success*, Sir Thomas Clifford in *The Hunchback*, and as Charles Surface.

Intense devotion to his art, an excellent habit of thinking for himself, and so importing originality even into the most familiar parts, indomitable courage and perseverance, have been the secrets of Mr. Willard's success. Nor is his dramatic method less admirable. Vigour, restrained always from lapsing into violence ; refinement of manner, speech, and style—never to be mistaken for affectation ; subtle and highly-finished art, which extracts the utmost value from every word and gesture ; a tenderness on occasion ; a passionate self-abandonment in

moments demanding moral heroism ; a stern intensity in depicting indignation or sorrow ; a sincerity and refinement free from cloying sentimentality or smug self-satisfaction in love scenes, have proved his versatility, his good taste, his control over the resources of his art.

Like all actors of somewhat striking physique, he possesses *les qualités de ses défauts*. He rarely quite obliterates himself in his part ; but as Mr. E. S. Willard has the good fortune to enjoy a well-deserved popularity, it is, at all events in the eyes of very many *habitués* of the theatre, no serious fault that his personal identity is disguised rather than lost in the characters which he assumes.

When the curtain has fallen and Mr. Willard has returned to his pretty home in Blenheim Road, St. John's Wood, the realistic professor of villainy in all its branches becomes an amiable, refined, somewhat studious gentleman, of decidedly æsthetic proclivities, with a passion for Swinburne's melodious poetry, quaint old furniture of blackest oak, dainty old china, and all the artistic *entourage* of a man of taste.

Out of doors a well-kept lawn and garden,

rich in flowers, and a conservatory, in which the actor cultivates successfully the Japanese chrysanthemums and colourful carnations in which his soul delights, speak well for his devotion to nature; while, within, a host of professional souvenirs, such as Tarquin's leopard-skin, Dick Dugdale's revolver, the Spider's stick, and Captain Ezra Promise's spurs and "Book of Hours," speak well for his devotion to his art. Portraits of a host of dramatic and literary celebrities, original editions of Swinburne, Dickens, Tennyson, Browning, and other of his favourite authors, and some twenty editions of Shakespeare, divide the honours with old blue china, Persian rugs and curios, and the thousand and one odds and ends which lend so indefinable but real a charm to the home of a man who is an artist in soul as well as by courtesy.

Mr. Willard is essentially a lover of home-life, and has a holy horror of notoriety. The cheap delight of being the centre of a circle of admiring and effusive enthusiasts in the gilded cages of the Mrs. Leo Hunters of to-day has no attraction for him; he does not "pine for higher society" than that of his fellow-artists

and beautiful and gentle wife, and in all that he does he is both on and off the stage the same earnest, sincere, honourable, self-respecting, and kindly-natured man. He has made many friends, and his successful career is followed by them with a keen interest which could only result from a feeling of personal liking and esteem.

Mr. Willard's amiable disposition and high personal character have won him many friends, and his charming wife dispenses the most delightful hospitality, to which an added charm is given by the cordial geniality of her popular actor-husband.

It is perhaps a little curious that a player of so much power should in his private life enjoy environment by things purely, almost femininely, æsthetic in their tone, but the combination of the dual nature thus displayed is no doubt one of the secrets of Mr. Willard's histrionic success, as it evidences an adaptability of mind and disposition as valuable on the stage as it is interesting off it, and emphasises the truth of Mr. Willard's theory of the necessity of versatility in his art: "An actor must act, and not trust to an author fitting him with a character

suitable to his particular mannerisms ;” and how fully he has realised this idea in his own person may be gathered from the *dictum* of the trade journal of the pottery business, which said of his Cyrus Blenkarn, in *The Middleman*, that “one would imagine, from its correctness to character and the furnace work, that some excitable and clever potter had become an actor, not that an actor had, for this piece only, become a potter.”

So tender a conscience has Mr. Willard upon the question of fidelity in his representations and stage “business,” that he studied the garb, mien, and deportment of half the Nonconformist ministers in London before appearing as the Rev. Judah Llewellyn in Mr. Jones’s play ; and in Mr. Berlyn’s poetical version of François Coppée’s delightful piece *Le Luthier de Cremona* the “bowing” of Filippo’s violin is the result of study, although the actual music is made by a player posted out of sight of the audience, just beneath the open window by the side of which the hump-backed, gifted violin-maker bends over the instrument which he has made with so much loving labour.

When *The Lights o' London* was produced with such remarkable success at the Princess's Theatre on September 10th, 1881, Mr. Willard got his first great chance of making a name upon the metropolitan stage, after years of varied and useful experience in the provinces. He seized it with avidity, and his Clifford Armytage was only second to the hero of Mr. Sims's clever drama in interest and individuality,—a thankless part to play, that of a cold-blooded, currish, traitorous scoundrel, a nineteenth-century Jacob who had improved upon the cunning of his biblical prototype by the aid of all the resources of civilisation. But, like a true artist, Mr. Willard accepted the hisses of the honest critics in the pit and gallery as what they were—the sincerest tribute which they could pay to the excellent art with which he played the villain.

Jealous of the manly qualities of Harold, grudging him alike the love of the woman upon whom he himself had cast amorous eyes, and the just inheritance of his father's wealth, the supple, insinuating rascal set his snares and planned a dual downfall for the hero. His

success was absolute, and Mr. Willard's quiet method of conveying the triumph of mind over matter, of callous, cruel, unscrupulous selfishness and hate over manly, unsuspecting honesty and goodwill, was faultless.

And all through the play the same careful and complete contrast was sustained. In make-up, in the unctuous voice, thickening on occasion into the hoarseness of passion or sliding into the sibilation of malignancy, in dress, in movement, gesture, in every microscopical detail by means of which the workings of an evil mind could be translated into visible form or audible sound, Clifford Armytage was the moral and physical antithesis of his hero-cousin, adding thus to the value of both parts, and intensifying, as only the introduction of artistic light and shade can, the interest of the whole work.

With this creation Mr. Willard planted his foot firmly upon the ladder of dramatic fame, and from that day to this he has quietly, resolutely, and almost without exception, mounted higher with each new impersonation.

Crammed with exciting incidents and remarkable characters, and labouring beneath the

burden of a too-complicated plot, *The Romany Rye*, produced by Mr. Wilson Barrett at the Princess's Theatre on June 10th, 1882, enabled Mr. Willard to create one more stage villain in the person of Philip Royston, the young Squire of Craignest, who won, by very virtue of his consummate vice, the unstinted approval of the public.

Cowardly and cruel to the ultimate degree, Philip Royston, who plots the ruin of his elder brother, Jack Hearne, consorts with scoundrels dipped deep in the regulation melodramatic dye of darkest hue, and acts the part of a pitiless betrayer to a trusting girl, was invested by Mr. Willard with so much charm, and surrounded by so fascinating an atmosphere of romance, that for once the audience, whose appreciation of such characters is usually manifested by groans and hisses, metaphorically took the romantic rascal to their hearts, and lifted him from the villainous to the heroic.

The triumph of the actor was complete. A more insinuating, gentlemanly scoundrel than Philip Royston could not have been created. At times, too, Mr. Willard exhibited a callous

cruelty which told with excellent effect ; and from first to last, throughout all the *sturm und drang* of a melodrama so rich in exciting incidents as to run the risk of surfeiting the audience with sensationalism, Philip Royston remained a noticeable figure, refreshingly cool in its imperturbable, consistent rascality, and as uncompromisingly villainous as even the most *blasé* connoisseur of stage criminals could demand.

Honours were divided between the audacity of the authors and the art of the actor in the case of Mr. Willard's quite remarkable creation of Captain Herbert Skinner, *alias* the Spider, in *The Silver King*. This dandy burglar, who divided his time between dining with duchesses and robbing them of their jewels ; who was equally at home in a boudoir in Mayfair or a “boozing-ken” in Ratcliffe Highway ; whose debonair criminality was combined with a patrician ease of bearing which induced the best people to accept him at his own valuation,—was a new thing on the stage, and as all the world is secretly, if not admittedly, perpetually panting for novelty as the very salt of life, the Spider was the hit of the season.

True, nobody in front of the foot-lights believed in him. He was obviously, obtrusively impossible. But the authors believed in him, and the actor believed in him—as a striking stage figure, and they were right. The art of the actor enabled him to compel the audience to discredit their senses, to stultify their judgment, to accept and to applaud the impossible. It was as though the Spider had recognised the onus laid upon him, and had said to himself: “They don’t believe in me. Very well—they shall!” and then presented himself to them as a personality—peculiar perhaps, but there in the flesh, substantial, palpable, not to be argued or reasoned out of existence.

So marked an individuality had this character, that Mr. Willard was known as the Spider outside the theatre; and one night, riding in an omnibus, the actor was much amused by the collapse of an abortive attempt to give him short change being clinched by the driver’s dry comment to the conductor, as the fare got down and entered the theatre: “No good trying it on *'im*, Bill! Don’t you know who he is? *He’s the ‘Spider’!*”

The veneer of a fine-gentleman air, with its under-surface of brutality and its rough excrescences of irrepressible vulgarity breaking through here and there, were most admirably assumed. The Spider was just as delicate a caricature in his assumption of gentlemanly airs as he was in his autocratic ordering about of his vulgar accomplices in crime; the meretricious varnish of an affectation of aristocratic polish only served to



MR. WILLARD AS THE SPIDER.

throw into coarser relief the innate vulgarity of the man; and Mr. Willard threw himself

into his part with so much artistic zeal that, instead of the gentleman-burglar seeming an absurd anomaly, fit only for the pages of a "penny dreadful" and the horrifying of sensation-seekers in the servants' hall, it became an interesting study and a new stage type, a triumph of art over artificiality, a metamorphosis of a daring, impossible conception into a creation which, if not convincing, was consistent, unique, and effective to a rare degree.

Mr. Willard's make-up in this part was so striking, and his gleaming teeth played so important a part in helping the illusion, that an *habitué* of the theatre was much amused one night by being accosted in the *foyer* of the theatre by a rather seedy stranger, who, after sundry apologies, announced that he had got a recipe for a wonderful tooth-powder, and innocently inquired if the critic thought that there was "any chance of getting Mr. Willard to be photographed as an advertisement of the elixir!"

As the Holy Clement, in *Claudian*, Mr. Willard enjoyed the privilege of launching with admirable elocutionary effect, and a bitter-

ness of denunciation only conceivable in a truly pious character, the most blighting, baneful, withering, and altogether awful curse ever heard upon the stage. Stabbed by the impious and licentious Claudian, he staggered across the stage, and, supporting himself against a rock, hurled gaspingly, with many moribund but muscular spasms, a curse unrivalled out of the pages of Barham.

But, maugre this terrible curse, which, be it said, was delivered with excellent art, the hollow tones and broken sequence caused by impending death being admirably assumed, the Holy Clement was so interesting a figure, so artistically conceived and embodied, that it was lamentable that the exigencies of the plot snatched him from the audience so early in the play.

Enough scope, however, was given in the part to enable the actor to give convincing evidence of the versatility which is indispensable in the manufacture of an artist of the first quality. From the impudent devilry of the Spider to the venerable sanctity of the Holy Clement was a change as utter as it was

successful, and Mr. Willard proved by it to demonstration that he was essentially an actor, not a mere projector of so many variations of his own personality.

As a fit and consistent companion picture to Mr. Wilson Barrett's boyish Prince of Denmark, the Princess's revival of *Hamlet* was remarkable for a comparatively youthful and refreshingly unconventional Claudius. Mr. Willard's King was, in its way and its degree, as fine, as original, as striking an assumption as Mr. Barrett's Hamlet. In both, intelligibility and a "sweet reasonableness" of conception were boldly opposed to the constrictive convention and traditional obscurity of the character.

Mr. Willard's Claudius was a full-blooded, sensual, animal King, instinct with the spirit of a court all lies and lust; a muscular, eupeptic, pleasure-loving creature, caring for nothing beyond the indulgence of his appetites; audacious in his selfishness; cruel, cynical, contemptuous of the loyal, loving student-soul which he could not even understand.

With such a Claudius the whole play became

at once more lucidly intelligible, and so robust a King was the legitimate and necessary complement to a boyish Hamlet and a Gertrude whose charms were yet lacking some years of their decadence. The unholy loves of Claudius and the Queen were comprehensible in this fresh light, and the new reading of the part was not only necessary to the consistency of the scheme of the whole production, but absolutely and convincingly natural.

The careless consciousness of power, the fierce animal passion leading to crime, the subsequent soul-sickening fear, were indicated by Mr. Willard with splendid lucidity and force ; his elocution was a delight to those who love to hear the sublimities of Shakespeare worthily voiced ; and the impersonation taken as a whole was completely artistic, picturesque, powerful, and harmonious.

It is given to few moderns to assume the classic garb of ancient Rome with picturesque effect, and in the great play of *Junius*, produced at the Princess's Theatre on February 26th, 1885, it was not the fault of Sextus Tarquin and his boon companions that their entrance was

provocative of a smile, as they lounged into the banqueting-hall of Tarquin's palace, flower-wreathed in strictly classical but lamentably unbecoming fashion. Rose-wreathed revellers are romantic enough on canvas, but it is difficult to imagine the reality as not having been just an atom absurd. But whatever tendency to an irreverent smile might have been provoked by the artificial roses, soon gave place in the case of Sextus Tarquin to unlimited admiration of the actor's art.

It was quickly apparent that Mr. Willard had in store for his audience a bold and brilliant character-study of a splendid sinner, a clue to whose nature was given in a fine passage, in which he rebuts the dictum of his more effeminate brother that good wine should be quaffed with slowness and discretion. With exuberant animal delight in sensual pleasures Sextus retorts :—

“ Oh, thou sluggard ! Joy
Is in the rapid seizure of the joy !
Methinks that Jove, the fashioner of kings
Gave his own lightning to my fiery blood !
War is with me no long-drawn tedious craft,
But the swift bliss of foeman grappling foe ;

Love is with me no shepherd's timorous tale
Piped on his reed, and wasting hours in sighs ;
But a fierce gladness, like a mountain stream,
Flashing back sunlight as it storms along."

The symbols used by Sextus may sound a little conventional to-day, but they are unquestionably just what he would have used in an age when Nature was still the great inspirer, and culture as yet only in its embryonic stage of affectation. And it conveys the dominant characteristics of the tyrant with admirable conciseness. Mr. Willard declaimed the passage magnificently, and his whole bearing throughout the revel was superbly daring and defiant. When, flushed with wine, the revellers boasted of the virtues of their wives, and Tarquin made a wager with the married Romans as to the occupations of the women during their absence, a quest was made, and when it was over, Sextus told Casca what he had found in the house of Collatinus, the husband of Lucretia, in a brief but very significant passage:—

"Amidst the maidens at the loom,
By the chaste Household Gods, there sat a form
So fair, so young, so beautifully calm,
Unconsciously we hushed our tread, and stood
Gazing and awed, as in some holy temple."

To this Casca, wondering at the tyrant's words, replied :

“ Why, Sextus, thou speak'st worthily ; thou mov'st
My rugged soldier's breast. I honour thee
For honouring Virtue thus.”

And then, with a splendid outburst of contempt, the brutal, mocking animality of the libertine bursts forth :

“ For honouring Virtue ?
What prat'st thou of, dull man ? I spoke of Beauty,
And I thought of Love ! ”

Presently came the crime of Tarquin, treated with perfect tact. The temptation, the crime, the remorse, all were conveyed with consummate skill, and the crushing of the egoistic, sensual tyrant, hitherto fearing neither the gods nor man, was portrayed with fine effect in Mr. Willard's masterly delivery of an eloquent passage :

“ What noise is that ? Who stirs ? O Gods ! I start
At my own footfall, quake at my own shadow.
So this is fear ! this sinking of the heart,
This freezing horror in the veins, this awe
In solitude ; yet this recoil from man !

* * * * *

Fell goddess Fear ! I who till now defied thee,
Feel thy pale power, and bow with trembling limbs.”

From this terrible moment Nemesis stalked towards the wretched sensualist with unflinching feet, leading to the startling climax in the final act.

The palace of Tarquin was a magnificent realisation of imperial pomp and luxury. Tarquin, utterly demoralised and in abject fear, tried to forget in the splendour of his surroundings the craven dread of coming doom which was eating away his heart. He sat upon a golden throne, the marble steps of which were strewn with the skins of tigers; his household guards surrounded him in all the panoply of armour; courtiers still fawned, and, to the eye at least, his pride and power and luxury were still unshaken. But gloom sat upon the brow of the Greek philosopher of the court, and Tarquin, the destroyer of life and honour, knew that his hour had come.

A noise was heard in the distance, and a procession approached, to the cry of "Room for the Household Gods!" Collatinus, Valerius, Junius, and a host of citizens and soldiers brought the dead Lucretia to the very feet of the libertine; Junius told the people of the

crime ; the tyrant, at bay, made one mad dash for life and liberty, but failed, and was dragged to the foot of the throne, forced to his knees, and stabbed to the heart by Junius, with the wild cry :

“Kneel, Tarquin, kneel!

Lucretia, tell the Gods that Rome is free!”

With this splendid tableau the play ended, and it was unanimously shown by the audience that in their judgment the Tarquin of Mr. Willard was a bold, powerful study, and a worthy pendant to the Claudius which in *Hamlet* marked him as an actor of equal power and originality.

In *Hoodman Blind*, produced with great success at the Princess's on August 18th, 1885, Mr. Willard was entrusted with the work of creating a villain of a type new to him. The dainty cigarette, punctiliously pointed moustache, and faultless *tenue* of the “Spider,” and the picturesque profligacy of Sextus Tarquin, gave place to the grizzled, middle-aged, hard-featured, plainly-dressed figure of a rascally land-agent, by whose wiles and roguery the handsome

young Buckinghamshire farmer was to be made miserable and penniless.

And as Mark Lezzard, Mr. Willard again displayed a masterly conception of character, an instinct for making-up with perfect effect and without exaggeration, and a grim power of portraying commonplace villainy, which once more justified the high opinion of his critics.

Consumed by a hopeless passion for the heroine, a passion fierce and more engrossing even than his love of money, Mark Lezzard was a well-thought-out and vigorously rendered study of hard, unscrupulous middle-age, labouring under a passion so misplaced, so hopeless, but so



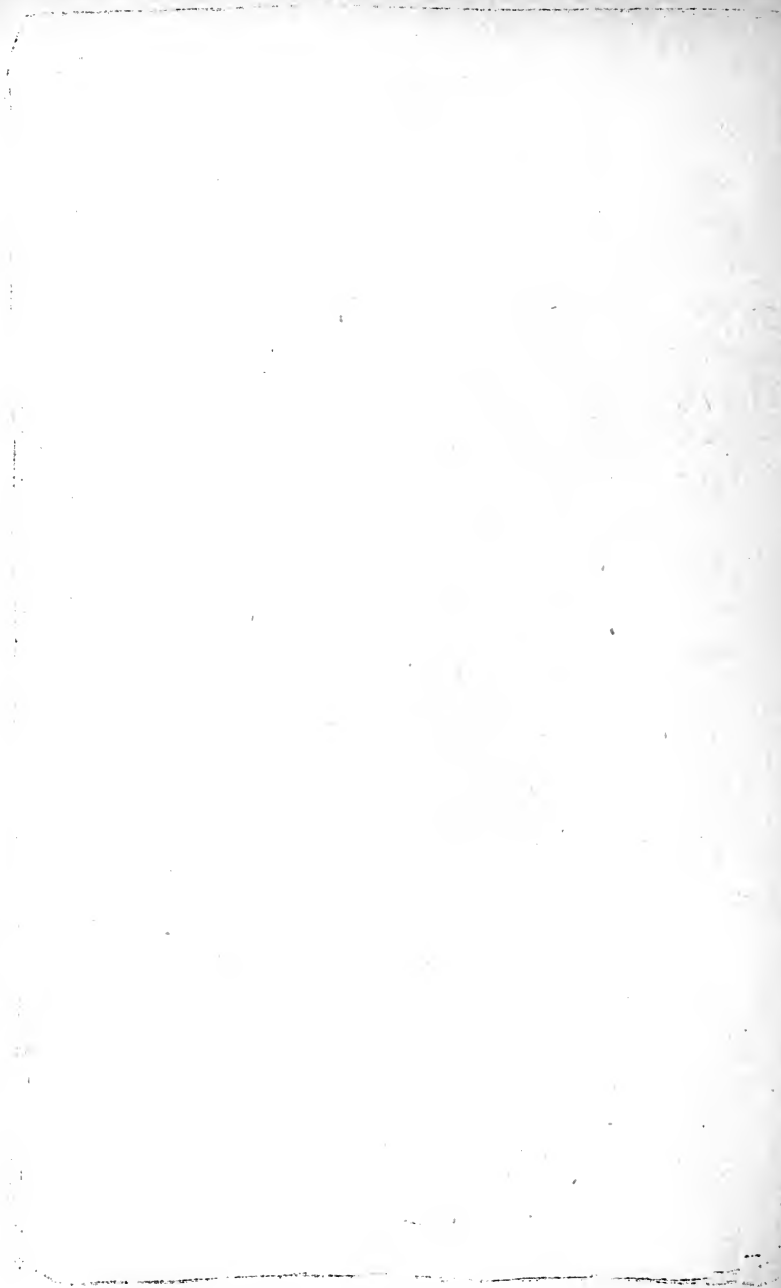
MR. E. S. WILLARD AS MARK
LEZZARD.

deeply rooted, that it only served to intensify all the evil qualities of his nature, and became transformed, in the fierce crucible of despair, into malignant hate. With quiet power, holding himself admirably free from rant and raving, Mr. Willard made Mark Lezzard an almost tragic figure. Condemned still to play the villain, he appeared to revel in creating a new species of the genus; and, as Paganini drew marvellously varied melody from a single string, so the actor, vowed to dramatic villainy, proved his talent by drawing from each new *rôle* some marked variations from its predecessors.

As *Glaucias*, in the brilliant production of *Clito*, on May 1st, 1886, Mr. Willard was allotted some of the wittiest and bitterest epigrams, and delivered them to perfection. The veritable living embodiment of the voluptuous, cruel luxury of pagan Greece, *Glaucias* is as cynical as he is selfish, as satirical as he is pitiless in the pursuit of his own evil will. The audacious imperturbability of the libertine, the insolence of vice of which he is the incarnation, were rendered with the utmost effect



MR. E. S. WILLARD AS CAPTAIN EZRA PROMISE.



by the actor; and the merciless, poisoned wit with which he expressed his contempt for Clito and the band of patriots with whom he was allied, flew from his sharp tongue with a spontaneity which added much to its effect.

The callous animality, the caustic irony, the cynical contemptuousness, the calculating cruelty of the Greek voluptuary, were exhibited with intense force, while the more delicate lights and shadows of the character were indicated with a subtlety and finesse which made the creation very realistic and convincing. Indeed, a more perfect foil to the classic grace and simple dignity of Clito could not have been conceived, and Glaucias proved a notable addition to Mr. Willard's growing gallery of stage villains.

Although the romantic drama of the Cavalier and Roundhead era, *The Lord Harry*, enjoyed but a brief spell of dramatic life, it sufficed to afford Mr. Willard an opportunity of creating a scoundrel of a new type. As Captain Ezra Promise, a Roundhead rascal whose lips were devoted in about equal measure to lies and biblical phrases, and whose rigid Puritanism but served as a cloak for a raging passion of

unholy desire, Mr. Willard was superb. The sham asceticism of the canting rogue, his treachery and malignity, his not wholly assumed severity and religious zeal, his bitter envy, hatred, and malice towards the ruffling, handsome Cavalier whom he professed to despise, were all excellently rendered. No gesture, no movement of limb or feature, no harsh inflection of tone which could accentuate the character, was omitted. The impersonation was exceptionally artistic and curiously picturesque. Grim and often despicable as Ezra Promise was often made, the actor's delicate art contrived to import into the assumption now and then an element of pathos, and thus compelled the occasional pity which usually exists, at least potentially, when an impersonation is an unqualified success.

Upon the closing of the Princess's season in 1886 Mr. Willard migrated to the Haymarket Theatre, appearing in a revival of *Jim the Penman*, playing the part of James Ralston, the gentlemanly forger, with characteristic finish and quiet force.

While playing at the Princess's as a member

of Mr. Barrett's company, Mr. Willard appeared at various *matinées* with great success, making an excellent impression in Robertsonian comedy in 1882, at the Crystal Palace, appearing as Dunscombe Dunscombe in *M.P.*, as Lord Ptarmigan in *Society*; and as Master Walter in *The Hunchback*. At the Gaiety he made an excellent King William in *Lady Clancarty*; and at various other *matinées* he appeared as Dr. Vasseur, in *Won by Honours*; as Tom Pinch; Rawdon Scudamore in *Hunted Down*, Wildrake in *The Love Chase*, and Iachimo in *Cymbeline*.

In 1887 and 1888 Mr. Willard appeared in many characters and upon various stages, his impersonations during that period embracing Tony Saxon, in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's drama *Hard Hit*, produced at the Haymarket on January 17th, 1887, which give him a chance of incisive, quietly effective acting in the part of a ruined country gentleman who takes his ill-luck with philosophical equanimity; Geoffrey Delamayn, in a Haymarket revival of Wilkie Collins's gloomy but powerful play *Man and Wife*, on March 29th, in which he made

the athlete even more brutally cruel than usual, and scored an artistic success ; Coranto, in Mr. A. C. Calmour's *Amber Heart*, produced at a Lyceum *matinée* on June 7th, when Mr. Willard delivered his poetical lines with great charm, and revealed a new phase of his talent by appearing as a tender-hearted, loyal and sympathetic man, and a wise and gentle physician ; an excellent Captain Hawkesley, in *Still Waters run Deep*, at a Criterion *matinée* ; Gonzales, in Ross Neil's romantic play *Loyal Love*, at a Gaiety *matinée* on August 18th, in which part he glossed over an impossibly extreme villain by the excellence of his acting ; Richard Dugdale, in *The Pointsman*, by Messrs. R. C. Carton and Cecil Raleigh, produced at the Olympic Theatre on August 29th, which enabled him to depict utter heartless, deliberate villainy with the concentrated power of which he is so complete a master ; and Colonel Prescott, in *Held by the Enemy*, at the Olympic, on December 24th, in which he proved capable and incisive as ever.

The thoroughly artistic versatility of Mr. Willard was shown convincingly enough in his

impersonation of the Tiger, in the Olympic revival of Tom Taylor's evergreen *Ticket-of-Leave-Man*, on January 28th, 1888. Whether as the frankly brutal villain, with a heart hard as the nether millstone, and a sublime audacity and recklessness, or disguised as the silvery-haired, silver-toned merchant, mild as milk and innocent as an unborn babe, Mr. Willard was faultless. Make-up, bearing, voice, gesture, all were utterly transformed, and testified to the actor's consummate mastery of his art.

In the revival of Tom Taylor and John Saunders' effective drama, *Arkwright's Wife*, on the occasion of Miss Helen Barry's *matinée* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, on Valentine's Day, 1888, Mr. Willard, as Peter Hayes, scored another notable success. The subtlety with which he conveyed the feeling of the absorption of Peter Hayes in his one idea was thoroughly artistic, and the *rôle* proved to be a quite remarkable assumption, in which Mr. Willard's acting gripped the audience from first to last, and won from them a cordial recognition.

On March 8th, 1888, the arch-villain of the contemporary stage was given an opportunity

of distinguishing himself once more in a *rôle* after his histrionic heart. The romantic drama *Christina*, originally produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre on April 22nd, 1887, was revived at the Olympic. The authors, Messrs. Percy Lynwood and Mark Ambient, had strengthened their original work, and the villain of the piece, Count Freund, could not have been entrusted to better hands than those of Mr. Willard. The actor apparently revelled in the depths of meanness, cowardice, and selfishness in which for the time being he had to sink his moral nature, and he abandoned himself to the ungracious task with heroic self-abnegation. The result was a remarkable creation, a notable if ephemeral stage figure, one more Willardesque, Iago-like villain of the deepest dye.

At a *matinée* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre on March 20th, Mr. Willard enacted the *rôle* of Master Walter in *The Hunchback* with signal success. Always a faultless elocutionist, Mr. Willard did the fullest justice to the text; his make-up was artistic and kept within discreet bounds, and his every word and gesture instinct with significance. The impersonation was a

notable one, and helped to confirm the high estimate of Mr. Willard's talent which was now becoming universal.

Upon May 3rd, 1888, in a revival of the tragedy at the Olympic, with Mrs. Bandmann Palmer as Lady Macbeth, Mr. Willard essayed the very difficult *rôle* of Macbeth. Versatile as he had proved himself to be, and entirely admirable as had been his Claudius in the Princess's revival of *Hamlet*, his Macbeth was not so striking an assumption as might have been anticipated. There were excellent moments in it,—moments that were almost great,—but upon the whole there was a lack of conspicuous originality of treatment, and the impersonation, although thoughtful, conscientious, and occasionally striking, was not as distinctly individual as an actor of so much talent might have been expected to make it. It was good, but it was not great, and Mr. Willard's past had led his critics to expect great things of him, whether in Shakespeare or in modern drama, and his Macbeth could only be written down a negative success, inasmuch as it was not a failure.

At an Olympic *matinée* on March 23rd, 1888, and subsequently when the piece went into the evening bill at the same theatre on May 16th, Mr. Willard gave the public a taste of his quality as a picturesque villain and passionate lover in the *rôle* of Count Danella, in the drama *To the Death*, a dramatic version of the very romantic, sensational, and interesting story, "Mr. Barnes of New York."

The terrible vendetta which is the central *motif* of the drama provided the audience with a sequence of sensations, and in the vengeful, subtle Count Danella, with all the fierce passion of the South burning in his veins, yet with ever a cool head and callous heart for intrigue and revenge, Mr. Willard created a remarkably effective stage figure. In the great scene with Marita his passionate outburst of love, despair, and crushing disappointment was an excellent and convincing piece of acting, and marked one more step on the road to the front rank in his art. The *rôle* of Count Danella was not only an effective one in itself, but excellently well suited to Mr. Willard's vivid and picturesque method, nor did he fail to make the most of it.

Never unduly obtrusive, he was always the most interesting figure on the stage, and his creation of the part of the passionate Southerner was a marked artistic success.

When Mr. John Lart rented the Globe Theatre for a revival of his sombre but powerful drama, *The Monk's Room*, Mr. Willard appeared, on October 12th, 1888, in the rôle of Sir Darrell Erne, with a success which was anticipated by those who had watched his previous impersonations critically. That Sir Darrell Erne would become in Mr. Willard's hands a thoughtful, earnest study was a foregone conclusion, and it was not surprising to find all the morbid melancholy of the part painted with rare fidelity. But beyond this phase of the character, so easily within Mr. Willard's range, his graceful, tender love-scenes with Eleanor Brandon lent a charm not only to the part, but to the play, infusing into it an element of pure romance and delicate sentiment of enormous value to the drama as a whole. The piece was well received, and Mr. Willard was unanimously acknowledged to have added a fascinating figure to his *répertoire*,

and to have given one more proof of his right to rank amongst the leading actors of the day.

After this came a migration to the Shaftesbury Theatre, when Mr. Willard reappeared with success as James Ralston in a revival of *Jim the Penman*, on June 8th, 1889; and also as Captain Howard Leslie, in *My Aunt's Advice*, given on the occasion of Mrs. Kitty Stephens's farewell to the stage on July 9th, after fifty years of acting. But these were only the preliminaries of one more notable and convincing impersonation.

On August 27th, 1889, Mr. Willard achieved one of his greatest successes, and enriched the stage with a really remarkable creation, in the character of Cyrus Blenkarn, in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's excellent play *The Middleman*.

With public feeling in regard to the relations of capital and labour, of brains and bank balances, excited to a pitch of enthusiasm which would almost deem it an unpardonable sin for a man to possess five pounds of his own and a determination to tyrannically insist on paying them to some other man in payment for work done, the popular success of a drama in which

the capitalist is represented as a crafty scoundrel, ready to drive a hard bargain with brains because their possessor is starving, was assured. The spirit of justice to labour, of hand or head, was in the air, and rightly. Nor, be it added, was any jot of sympathy due to the capitalist, the "Middleman" between the inventor and the public, the producer and the consumer, in Mr. Jones's drama. Moreover, the play itself was well written, full of excellent situations and effective contrasts, yet its success was certainly none the less that in some of its most telling passages, some of its most touching incidents, were voiced and painted sentiments and pictures in harmony with the exaggerated feeling of the day.

In *The Middleman* Mr. Willard assumed the rôle of an old inventor—a simple, pathetic figure, half blind with ceaseless labour at the potter's wheel and furnace; aged before his time by devotion to his idea of reviving a lost art in glazing pottery; utterly absorbed in his life-work, to the neglect of his interests and even of his well-loved daughter. His whole nature steeped in dogged resolution to succeed

or die at his work, there was always a simple dignity about Cyrus Blenkarn—the innate and ineradicable dignity of a man in fierce earnest to realise a worthy aspiration ; and the inventor, poor, purblind, poring, shabby, starving fanatic that he seems, yet compels respect once and for all time.

Engrossed by one idea, alternately rapt to the seventh heaven of enthusiasm by a glimmering promise of success, and cast into an abysmal despair by yet one more failure, the old potter is an intensely pathetic study, elaborated with loving care by author and by actor. But beneath the surface, dormant but never for an instant dead, burns a passionate love for his motherless girl. The inventor is dominant for the most part, but now and again the imperious voice of nature makes itself heard, and the father—loving, tender, anxious, full of self-reproach and tender solicitude—touches all hearts.

But the central idea is not domestic, it is social. It is the *métier* of Cyrus Blenkarn not only to revive, to some degree, all the romance and tragedy of a historical incident familiar to

students of the industries of England, but in a greater degree still to body forth the popular ideal of the brainworker of to-day, robbed, tyrannised over, cheated, crushed, by the middleman and his money.

And Mr. Willard has rarely done anything finer than the splendid old enthusiast, slaving, fireless, foodless, desperate, yet buoyed up through all with a prophetic instinct of ultimate triumph. And when that triumph comes; when, after failure has succeeded failure, and no money and no credit for the monomaniac remain; when the last chair in the wretched home has been broken up to feed the insatiable maw of the furnace—when, with an inarticulate, gasping cry, culminating in a hoarse shout of triumph, the middleman, tempting still with his offers to purchase this man's life-work, is met with the cry, "*I buy now!*" Mr. Willard is superb. The climax is perfect, the acting great, the artistic triumph indisputable.

Mr. Willard has created many notable parts, but it is doubtful whether he will ever do anything much finer than the wild outburst of scorn

and triumph with which Cyrus Blenkarn meets the middleman at the moment when, half-mad with misery and failure, the crowning moment of his life comes, and all the wrong and misery, all the toil and heart-ache, all the failure and humiliation of the past years are forgotten in that one wild, exultant cry of passionate triumph. If he had done nothing else, Cyrus Blenkarn would alone entitle Mr. Willard to the gratitude of playgoers for an emotional and intellectual pleasure of a high order; and the figure of the old potter will always remain a distinct creation and a worthy achievement.

A proof of the marked individuality of the actor's style, and the crisp dialogue of Mr. Jones's plays, is afforded by the fact that upon the Parade at Brighton a short time ago an *al-fresco* elocutionist was to be heard rendering, with considerable dramatic power and a curiously clever reproduction of Mr. Willard's inflections of voice and eloquence of gesture, scenes from *The Middleman*, to a thoroughly interested audience; and the oddest part of the matter was that, in reply to the inquiry of a gentleman

whose attention had been arrested as he was walking along the King's Road by what he at first believed to be Mr. Willard's voice, the humble imitator of the popular actor asserted, with every appearance of veracity, that he had acquired his knowledge of the author's text and the actor's method from only two visits to the Shaftesbury Theatre.

On April 5th a new play by Arthur Law, called *Dick Venables*, was produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre, with Mr. Willard in the title rôle; but the drama did not prove a popular success, nor the character of Dick Venables, a returned convict, peculiarly acceptable, although the actor contrived to introduce certain artistic touches into what was from the first an unattractive and unprofitable rôle. The play enjoyed but a brief life, and Mr. Willard was soon engaged upon a character offering considerably more scope for the exercise of his artistic talents.

One of the most beautiful and pathetic pieces of acting which Mr. Willard has given to the stage was his creation of the hunchback, Filippo, in Mr. Alfred Berlyn's daintily-written

adaptation of François Coppée's poetical play *Le Luthier de Cremona* entitled *The Violin Makers*, produced for the first time at the Shaftesbury Theatre on April 22nd, and revived successfully on August 27th, 1890.

The sublime self-conquest of the deformed genius, who beats down the love in his own breast and foregoes a triumph as an artist in order that the girl he loves may "weep no more," but be happy with the man of her choice, his fellow-pupil, was represented by Mr. Willard with singular power and delicacy. The ecstasy of the artist; the bitter self-scorn bred of his physical infirmity; the absolute self-sacrifice; the passionate but brief spell of self-pity,—all were portrayed with true artistic feeling, and Mr. Willard's fine voice lent new music to the author's diction.

Mr. Willard has done nothing better in its way than Filippo, a most touching and beautiful impersonation, invested with an irresistible natural dignity which blots out bodily infirmity and sheds a soft light of sublime self-sacrifice which hides all physical defects, and even makes the triumph of genius, born of the

brain, second to the selflessness which is the outcome of a noble nature.

Upon May 21st, 1890, the Shaftesbury Theatre was the scene of the production of a curious play—clever, daring, unconventional,—written by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, probably with Mr. Willard in his mind as the ideal hero of a drama destined to give rise to much discussion, and to an event unique in the history of the stage—a performance given to an audience consisting entirely of the clergy. This notable play was *Judah*, and as the hero, the Rev. Judah Llewellyn, Mr. Willard found a congenial and remarkable part.

The author of *Saints and Sinners* wisely deprecated criticism of the new drama until it could be judged as a whole. For as a matter of fact, he elected to point an admirable moral by means of two acts of a most unwholesome character, and a third which went far to redeem the ill tendency of the other two.

The story was that of the loves of an earnest young Welsh Presbyterian minister, garbed like a high-church curate—presumably for æsthetic reasons—and a girl, the tool of a

contemptible father, who compelled her to act the part of a hypnotic healer, and to claim supernatural powers induced by protracted fasts.

At first Vashti Dethic was worshipped by Judah Llewellyn in a purely spiritual fashion—at least so he said, and no doubt believed. She was an angel, a saint, so far above him, so pure, that the mere mention of earthly love to her was a profanation. Yet, a little later, all this spirituality was thrown to the winds at the call of passion, and the ascetic, fanatical minister, having unwillingly discovered that Vashti was an impostor, was seen to rejoice in the fact, crying that he was glad of it, as now he could make her his own; in a word, the character was transformed from a Judah to a Judas, virtually denying the spiritual in man and glorying wholly in the animal. And in this the author was to be congratulated upon his courage in preferring truth to a specious gloss of pretence. He startled and shocked—but he convinced. It was a terrible transformation, or rather a terrible revelation—but it was human nature: it was true; and therefore, as a study, to be tolerated, and, as a work of art, to be admired.

But that the first two acts of the new drama were about as unwholesome as they could be is not to be denied. They showed the audience the utter undermining of the spirituality of an intensely strong and earnest man, and the unqualified triumph of his animality, under the influence of a woman's beauty. True, this radical change was not effected without a prelude of intense agony and moral torture ; true that it led to a mental and moral condition of misery that was to the man a very hell upon earth ; but it meant that woman's beauty, her physical attractions and they alone, were potent enough to sweep away all moral considerations, even from a man as sublimely earnest and intensely religious as Judah Llewellyn, and to induce him to become, for the sake of the woman whose beauty had maddened him, a liar and a perjurer.

Mr. Jones displayed his knowledge of human nature in this, but whether the value of the lesson taught was worth the painful spectacle of a good man's degradation paraded without pity was a debatable point.

In the last act the author portrayed both

Judah and Vashti as worn-out by the misery of their wretched secret. There was much of the pathos of *The Scarlet Letter* in the situation, but Mr. Jones, able as he is, is not Hawthorne, and somehow or other it was not easy to feel the unmistakable thrill of sympathy either with the woman or the man. There were circumstances of sadness in her life which extenuated her career of deception ; and there had been a term of living agony for the man which might well atone for his lapse from an almost super-human height of spirituality into an abyss of lying and fierce, almost brutal, passion.

Perhaps it was just this powerful contrast which prevented the audience from feeling the full measure of sympathy which Judah was intended to command. He had been just a little too good and just a little too bad, even for poor human nature. At first Vashti was a saint and he a pious worshipper at her shrine ; afterwards she was a fiend and he a reveller in her degradation, triumphing in the sin that gave her to his passion. He might love this woman with all the strength of his nature, but it was hardly necessary for him to rave of an

eternity of misery to be spent together. Judah's sole virtue at one stage of the play was that he was no hypocrite. He was wholly and solely moved by the woman's beauty, and he did not pretend anything else. The climax of the last act was very fine, and almost made one condone the incidents that had gone before; and the idea of setting Judah and Vashti to work out their redemption together as man and wife, and build a church whose foundations should be Truth, was worthy and altogether beautiful. But when all was told, and the drama looked back upon calmly, it was not easy to get rid of the conviction that Mr. Jones had at last succeeded in writing an unwholesome play.

A striking, picturesque figure, Mr. Willard dominated the stage and the audience; and Judah Llewellyn, ethical considerations apart, must remain a remarkable memory with playgoers and a distinct artistic triumph for the actor.

On the afternoon of August 20th, an audience wholly composed of members of the clerical profession witnessed *Judah* by invitation, proving

most appreciative, and condoning the Rev. Judah Llewellyn's lamentable lapse for the sake of Mr. E. S. Willard's consummate art.

Upon the afternoon of August 27th, 1890, Mr. Willard gave a pleasant proof of his versatility by appearing first as Filippo, in Mr. Alfred Berlyn's *The Violin Makers*, and then as Abraham Boothroyd, in a new comedy sketch, by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, called *The Deacon*, which proved to be an amusing piece, smartly written, and virtually a defence of the stage against the prejudices of narrow-minded bigots.

As Abraham Boothroyd, wholesale bacon factor, Mayor of Chipping Padbury-on-the-Wold, and Senior Deacon of Ebenezer Chapel, grey and respectable, clad in a suit of superfine black, with pale face, square grey beard, and long, clean-shaven, rigid upper lip—a monument of prosperous piety and middle-class respectability, and a bundle of deeply-rooted prejudices, Mr Willard was irresistible. Little tradesmanlike tricks of manner, a faint North-country burr in the rich voice, a quiet twinkle in the eye as if the old Adam were not wholly dead, and

just the right note of passing pathos here and there, necessary to give the man a certain dignity, proved Mr. Willard a close observer of human nature.

Coming to London to take part in an indignation meeting to rescue Exeter Hall from the contamination of being converted into a theatre, he is taken to a theatre instead, and is himself converted from his prejudices with a rather miraculous suddenness and completeness, partly by the discovery that the Juliet who has awakened such tender memories in his old heart is the child of his own daughter, who had run away from home with an actor twenty years before.

The Deacon was only what it professed to be, a sketch, but it was so smartly written, and, above all, it gave Mr. Willard a *rôle* so rich in quiet comedy, that Abraham Boothroyd ranked at once as a distinct creation, and a pleasant addition to the *répertoire* of the actor.

After a brief but very successful farewell appearance in the provinces, Mr. Willard set out for America on October 18th, 1890, seeking

new laurels in a land where other notable players from the old country had found so warm a welcome, and followed by hearty goodwill and sympathetic interest on the part of thousands of English playgoers, who had long ago learned to recognise in him one of the foremost, ablest, most capable, and most conscientious players of the period.

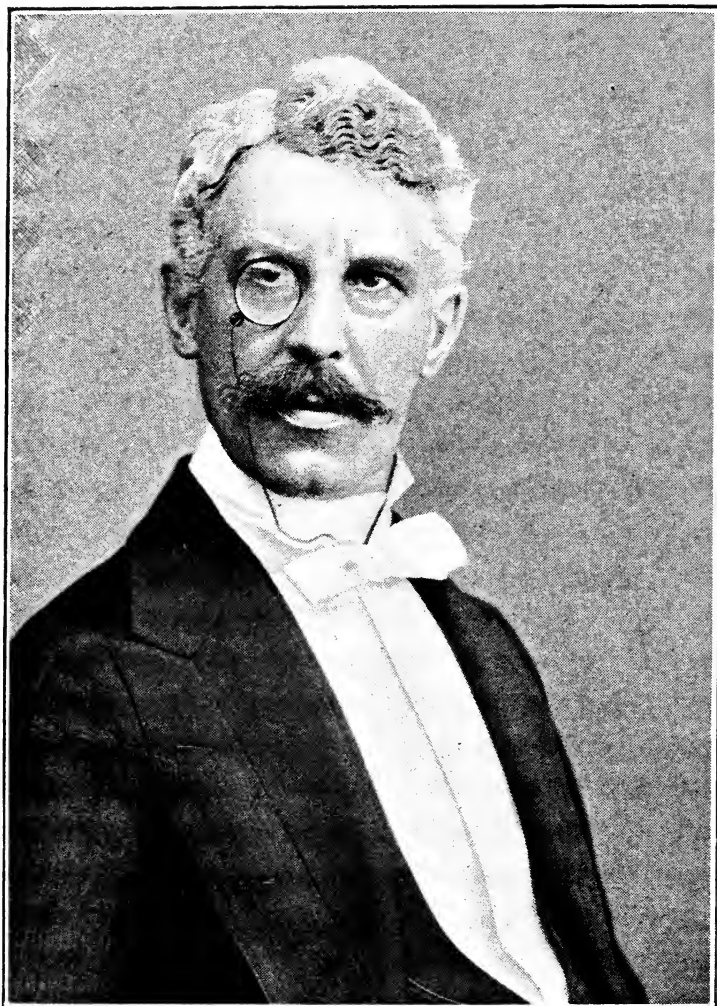
It was characteristic of Mr. Willard's strong sympathy for everything Shakespearean that on the last Sunday spent in England before his departure for the States, after playing in Birmingham on the Saturday night, he made a pilgrimage from Kenilworth to Warwick, and then to Stratford-on-Avon with Mr. Howard Paul and another friend, dining at the old "Red Horse," upon the very table on which Washington Irving wrote his delightful sketch of the old town in which Shakespeare was born. It is not difficult to believe that as the popular actor "loll'd back in his elbow-chair, and cast a complacent look about the little parlour of the Red Horse," that "the words of sweet Shakespeare" passed through his mind as they had passed many years before through

that of the brilliant author of the inimitable "Sketch-book."

Mr. Willard opened in New York at Palmer's Theatre, on November 10th, in *The Middleman*, and at once secured a complete success, his impersonation of Cyrus Blenkarn being accepted by critics and public alike as a thoroughly artistic and convincing creation, and that initial performance was the first step upon a tour through America which proved one continuous series of successes. Mr. Willard's peculiarly earnest and straightforward style of acting, combined with the elaborate and thoroughly artistic finish of his characterisation, took the American audiences by storm, and they accepted him at once and without question. That he should so speedily win favour on the other side of the Atlantic is not surprising to those who know the mood of the best-class audiences in the United States. There is a shrewness and natural keenness of judgment about them not altogether unlike that which characterises north-country audiences here, with whom, too, Mr. Willard is extremely popular. But when all is said, the sufficient reason for his Trans-

atlantic success may be found in the artistic conception and conscientious study which Mr. Willard brings to bear upon every *rôle* which he undertakes, whether in the Old World or the New.





W. H. H.

Samuel J. H.

I don't pretend to
be a particularly
good sort of fellow,
nor a particularly
bad sort of fellow,
Caste. act I.

S. B. BANCROFT.

By a happy conjunction of circumstances, Mr. S. B. Bancroft has achieved a position of peculiar interest in the chronicles of the contemporary stage. A clever and conscientious actor, he might yet have not bulked so largely in the eye of the world, had it not been that, in conjunction with the late T. W. Robertson, he created a new *genus* of dramatic character, and, more than that, reflected with unimpeachable fidelity the physical, mental, and moral peculiarities of a numerous body of men about town. Mr. Bancroft achieved the sublimation of the British swell, and forged a new and lasting link between society and the stage.

The combined tenderness of the author and refinement of the actor, enabled the *genus* "swell" to recognise in the dramatic mirror a somewhat flattering portrait of itself, learning, perhaps to its surprise, that a man-about-town might have a heart, and a "heavy swell" be not wholly void of brain. This titillated the *amour propre* of the class which gave the dramatist such types as Jack Poyntz, Captain Hawtree, and Sir Frederick Blount, and ensured the success of the actor. Mr. Bancroft presented a section of society—and a section with as much influence to-day as it had when, as the late Lord Lamington told in the delightful reminiscences which Death killed all too soon, George IV. gave his famous breakfast to conciliate "the dandies" of whom the "Bancroft swells" are the legitimate descendants—with its portrait. And if by the exercise of their art the author and the actor invested the counterfeit presentments with perhaps a rather more generous share of lovable and manly attributes than Nature commonly bestows upon the living originals, the excess was kindly, diplomatic, easily condonable.

The one great charm about Mr. Bancroft's most notable creations, or, if not the most notable, at least those with which he is most generally identified, was that they were essentially gentlemen. They might not scintillate with intellectuality, their brains might not always be as brilliant as their boots, they might not be free from many weaknesses of will and wit; but they had the instincts of gentlemen. One felt that they were in the main honest, loyal, scorning a lie or any mean thing, reverencing, if in somewhat easy-going fashion, their conscience as their king; and, although perhaps a little dense and apt to blunder off the line now and again, for the most part holding a very clear code of honour—a code which might not always square with the notions of *bourgeois* respectability and convention, but Draconian in its claim upon their conscience, and rendering impossible any mean or cruel thing.

Society of to-day is not wholly lacking in Colonel Newcomes, but, for one *preux chevalier* of that exquisitely perfect type, there are hundreds of Jack Poyntzes, of Blounts, of

Hawtrees—good, slow-witted, but big-hearted fellows, who, to paraphrase Rochester on Charles II., “never do a cruel thing and rarely say a wise one,” but who yet inspire confidence and affection by their simple manliness and dunderheaded but dogged honesty. And this numerous class looked in the mirror which Mr. Bancroft held up to nature, saw themselves at their best, and, pardonably enough, did not quickly weary of contemplating the pleasant picture.

There can be no doubt that the satisfying completeness with which Mr. Bancroft idealised the “heavy swell” went straight to the heart of society, and compelled success. It is especially true of the actor’s calling that “those who live to please must please to live,” and Mr. Bancroft’s creations were above all things pleasant—clean, wholesome, refined, good-hearted types of English gentlemen, whose foibles and harmless affectations it was possible to laugh at without an atom of contempt. Indeed, the more one laughed at them the more one loved them—they were so very human, and their little tincture of absurdity

was distinctly consolatory to all who are wise enough to recognise that the profoundest philosopher, the most dignified personage, is not without his humorous side to the acute student of human nature.

Nor, when occasion served, did Mr. Bancroft fail to indicate, with a good deal of quiet power, the pluck, the dignity, the chivalrous loyalty and almost womanly tenderness which help to make up the best type of manhood. Without this his art would have been incomplete and unsatisfying, for had he merely shown the glittering surface of society life, and failed to reveal the strongly running undercurrent of earnestness and forceful emotions, he might speedily have wearied the public and worn out his welcome. Beneath the surface-nonchalance, the lip-cynicism or banality, the apparent shallowness of the man-of-the-world, would all at once be indicated unsuspected depths of feeling, fierce passions kept in check by an iron will, beautiful brotherly tenderness, ardent love of man for woman, all that go to make a complete man and perfect gentleman; and the actor's talent proved itself

versatile, and vigorous, faithful, analytic and convincing.

To create a distinct school of character, and to invest a difficult and often dull type of man with some humour, and a real, but often unsuspected worthiness and charm, were no mean achievements, and Mr. Bancroft would have fairly earned the reputation he enjoys had he done nothing more than this; but, like all successful actors, his *répertoire* has been as varied as its range was wide.

It was on January 1st, 1861, as Mr. Bancroft records in that interesting volume of reminiscences, "Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft On and Off the Stage," that he, a stage-stricken youth, plodded along the cheerless streets of Birmingham to the Theatre Royal, where he was engaged by Mr. Mercer Simpson at the modest salary of a guinea a week, to play whatever might be thrown in his way. And, a few nights later, he made his first appearance upon any stage in the humble guise of a courtier in the pantomime, hiding his feelings whatever they may have been, behind a comic mask.

Whatever success or the reverse attained

by the *débutant* in this initial part was so impersonal, thanks to the mask, that it is not recorded, but the assumption is that the "courtier" showed some glimmer of light through the chinks of his bushel, as, immediately after, he was entrusted with his first speaking part, that of Lieutenant Manley, in Mr. Bayle Bernard's drama *St. Mary's Eve*.

Evidently the juvenile enthusiast showed even then some promise of his future excellence, for, during the season, which came to an end in July, Mr. Bancroft enacted no less than thirty-six different parts, appearing, among other things, with Madame Celeste in those old-fashioned dramas *The Green Bushes* and *Flowers of the Forest*.

Then followed a term of provincial apprenticeship, which must have proved invaluable as a means of training the memory and giving elasticity to the mind by imposing upon the young actor a constantly changing round of more or less responsible impersonations. The work must have been onerous and incessant, but it was congenial, and "the labour we delight in physics pain," while the zealous

young recruit, anxious to rise from the ranks as rapidly as might be, welcomed what under other circumstances might have appeared intolerable drudgery.

After the close of his first season in Dublin, Mr. Bancroft fulfilled a brief engagement in Cork, returning to Birmingham for the season terminating in the spring of 1862, by which period he had mastered sixty-four new parts. Then came a few weeks' engagement in the summer at Devonport, where for the first time he played leading parts, the first being that of Captain Murphy Maguire in *The Serious Family*, and the other that of Captain Hawkesley in *Still Waters run Deep*.

The remainder of 1862 and the years 1863 and 1864 were occupied by a short engagement in Birmingham; a season in Dublin, during which, in the spring of 1863, Mr. Bancroft received an offer to join the company of the St. James's Theatre, but preferred to increase his experience in the provinces before facing a London audience; a month's engagement in Birmingham, followed by a successful summer in Devonport, during which an offer,

again declined, was made for him to go to the Princess's Theatre ; a return to Dublin in 1864, and then an engagement at the Prince of Wales's, Liverpool, where Mr. Bancroft met Miss Marie Wilton for the first time, and accepted an engagement to join the company which she was forming to open the Prince of Wales's Theatre in Tottenham Court Road, in conjunction with Mr. H. J. Byron.

With the Liverpool engagement Mr. Bancroft's provincial wanderings came to an end, but that he owed much to the wide experience gained during that laborious period of four years and four months is obvious from the fact that during that time he played no less than three hundred and forty-six parts, covering almost every conceivable detail of dramatic work.

Remembering this, it is perhaps all the more remarkable that Mr. Bancroft should so quickly and so completely become identified with a class of character new to the stage, and of conspicuous individuality of style.

Happily, the author of the series of delightful plays which founded what has been called

with flippant injustice the teacup-and-saucer school of comedy, was no believer in the cynical theory that

“To feel for none is the true social art
Of the world’s stoics—men without a heart.”

His men of the world might be stoical in so far as a repression of any outward sign of strong feeling, whether of joy or suffering, was concerned. But for all their Spartan or, it might be, Sybaritic self-sufficiency, they were creatures of living flesh and blood, in whom the pulses of human passions throbbed with no less strength because good breeding and caste traditions forbade hysterical and violent manifestations.

The opening of the Prince of Wales’s Theatre, from which Mr. Bancroft’s record as a metropolitan actor dates, took place on Saturday, April 15th, 1865, with a piece called *A Winning Hazard* by Mr. J. P. Wooler, in which Mr. Bancroft made his first appearance on a London stage, and an operatic burlesque extravaganza, called *La ! Sonnambula ! or, The Supper, the Sleeper, and the Merry Swiss Boy*; “being a passage in the life

of a famous 'Woman in White,' a passage leading to a tip-top story, told in this instance by Henry J. Byron." The programme, which was then commonly of the three-decker description, was completed by the farce of *Vandyke Brown*.

In May Mr. Bancroft appeared in a comic drama by Palgrave Simpson, called *A Fair Pretender*, and on June 10th he created the rôle of Captain Thistleton, in H. J. Byron's bright and successful comedy, *War to the Knife*. In this clever play Mr. Bancroft impersonated the man-about-town with much of the quiet humour and originality which were afterwards to be employed to so much advantage, and attracted an amount of favourable notice which fairly started him upon a career of popularity and success.

On September 25th, 1865, Mr. Bancroft assumed with renewed success the principal part in Dion Boucicault's farce, *A Lover by Proxy*, and it was on November 11th in the same year that the keynote of the subsequent career of Mr. Bancroft, and the lady who was soon to become his wife, was struck by the

production of the first of the series of charming Robertsonian comedies, *Society*.

Although the piece had been played with success in Liverpool, it was not approached without some qualms and misgivings, naturally exaggerated by the feeling that so much depended upon its finding favour with the somewhat exacting and exceptional *habitués* of the Prince of Wales's Theatre. But courage conquered, the piece was produced, and all the best people flocked to see themselves satirised, and to laugh good-naturedly at their own foibles —no doubt thinking all the while how excellently the cap fitted their dearest friends. Upon the first representation of *Society* Mr. Bancroft was cast for Sidney Daryl, and the managerial acumen which entrusted him with so responsible a part was justified by its skilful rendition. Later, when the comedy was revived, with gratifying success, on September 21st, 1868, Mr. Bancroft appeared as Tom Stylus, and presented a curious but not uncommon phase of Bohemian character with remarkable fidelity and much shrewd humour.

In Mr. Byron's comedy, *A Hundred Thousand Pounds*, produced on May 5th, 1866, Mr. Bancroft created the part of General Gerald Goodwin, and then appeared with the Prince of Wales's company in Liverpool, when, in addition to the existing *répertoire*, the new comedy *Ours*, by T. W. Robertson, was given a trial trip, before being launched upon the wider waters of metropolitan criticism.

It was on September 15th, 1866, that *Ours* was first produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, with immediate and unqualified success. Mr. Bancroft created the *rôle* of Angus Macalister with all the care and finish which playgoers had by this time learned to expect from an actor who was obviously and always conscientious. He played the new part for an unbroken run of a hundred and fifty nights, and consolidated his claim upon the good opinion of the public.

As Captain Hawtree, in *Caste*, the next of the famous Robertsonian series, produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre on April 6th, 1867, Mr. Bancroft was perfectly in his element. It is not difficult to imagine how

easily the character might have been vulgarised, or else conventionalised into a comparative nonentity. An over-dressed, swaggering, noisy Hawtree might have been evolved from the inner consciousness of a commonplace character-actor, but in the hands of Mr. Bancroft the author's ideal was safe. The make-up alone was a consummate piece of art. Quietly dressed, as the heavy dragoon school of swells like Hawtree are always sure to be; with sleek, dark hair, and all the personal characteristics of a well-groomed man, this new style of stage fop came as a revelation to those accustomed to more coarsely-painted portraits of a class not easily imitated or, in truth, generally understood; but it was so convincing in its quiet realism that it was accepted without hesitation, and welcomed as a notable addition to dramatic types. The drawling speech and apparent affectation, the stolid solemnity relieved by a subtly suggested shrewdness, the "good form" of the man with it all, his slight *souçon* of horsiness, the whole tone of the creation—were irresistible; and the actor's reputation became more firmly rooted

than ever. The piece ran right through the season, which ended in July, and was then played in Liverpool and Manchester with equal success.

The odour of popularity in which *Caste* was steeped when the end of the season arrived enabled Mrs. Bancroft to revive the play with renewed success when the autumn campaign commenced, on September 28th, 1867, and it was not until December 21st that Mr. Bancroft was afforded an opportunity of creating one more "swell"—there is no other word which conveys the idea of his impersonations so clearly and completely—in the *rôle* of Beecher Sprawley, in Dion Boucicault's comedy *How She Loves Him*, in which the actor once more pleased playgoers and won new commendation from the critics, although the play itself, despite much clever dialogue and some supremely amusing situations, only ran forty-seven nights.

When the new comedy by T. W. Robertson, called *Play*, was produced, on the night of Saturday, February 15th, 1868, Mr. Bancroft was provided with the *rôle* of an unmitigated

rascal and impudent adventurer, in which he exhibited his talent to great advantage, and the Chevalier Browne proved one more successful and notable addition to his *répertoire*. This was followed by another revival of *Caste*, which lasted until the close of the season on July 27th, the theatre being then closed until September 21st, when *Society* was revived, Mr. Bancroft then taking the part of Tom Stylus with admirable effect, his nonchalant air suiting the character to perfection.

On December 12th a new comedy by Mr. Edmund Yates, *Tame Cats*, was produced, Mr. Bancroft appearing as Mortimer Wedgwood, a poet-charlatan and "tame cat" of a class that did not commend itself to the public taste, and the play only ran for eleven nights, being followed by a revival of the ever-popular *Society*; and on January 16th, 1869, the new Robertsonian comedy, *School*, was produced with instant and unqualified success, Mr. Bancroft creating the delightfully sympathetic part of Jack Poyntz with admirable art, revelling in the quiet humour of the character to the utmost, and presenting, too, an excellent picture of the

well-bred lover, handsome, well-groomed, well-tailored, and an altogether wholesome and agreeable specimen of Young England.

School was an enormous success, running right through the season, and being revived again on September 11th, to crowded houses; being played altogether three hundred and eighty-one times.



MR. BANCROFT AS JACK POYNTZ IN
"SCHOOL."

The last comedy destined to be written for the Prince of Wales's Theatre by the pen that had done so much worthy work was produced on April 23rd, 1870, and *M.P.* proved at once as pronounced a success as any of its predecessors, Mr. Bancroft exhibiting, in the rôle of Talbot Piers, his customary shrewdness, self-control, and quiet humour. An autumn revival was followed by a revival of *Ours* on

November 26th, Mr. Bancroft then taking the part of Hugh Chalcot, instead of his original one of Angus Macalister, and acquitting himself to the complete satisfaction of author and audience. The revival ran through the following season with unbroken success, to be followed in its turn by a revival of *Caste* in September 1871, and a production of *Money* on May 4th, 1872, with Mr. Bancroft as Sir Frederick Blount, an admirable piece of acting, remarkable for the refinement and distinction with which the actor invested this and similar parts—the physically colourless and mentally inane baronet, with his lisp, his drawl, his vacuous stare and excellently-cut clothes, being perfect in his peculiar way.

It was not until February 22nd, 1873, that it became advisable to supersede Lord Lytton's comedy with Mr. Wilkie Collins's adaptation of his powerful novel *Man and Wife*, in which Mr. Bancroft undertook the minor part of Mr. Speedwell, a doctor, but made it of value by thoughtful and refined acting.

A revival of *School* followed, on September 20th, 1873, with Mr. Bancroft as Jack Poyntz,

and so great was its success that it was not until April 4th, 1874, that *The School for Scandal* was acted for the first time by the Prince of Wales's company, Mr. Bancroft proving an unconventional Joseph Surface, his studious moderation and careful avoidance of an over-emphasis of the objectionable characteristics of the man being purely artistic, and rendering the *rôle* natural and acceptable to a rare degree, Joseph's villainy being indicated rather than expressed, with a *finesse* and delicacy infinitely more effective than any bolder or coarser interpretation could have been. The actor seemed thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the age in which the action is laid, wore the picturesque dress with grace, and expressed the superficial courtliness of the manners of the period with much lucidity and distinction, his Joseph Surface being to the full as clever an assumption as his affected macaroni Sir Benjamin Backbite, in a *matinée* revival of the old comedy given on May 14th, 1870, at Drury Lane, for the benefit of the Dramatic College.

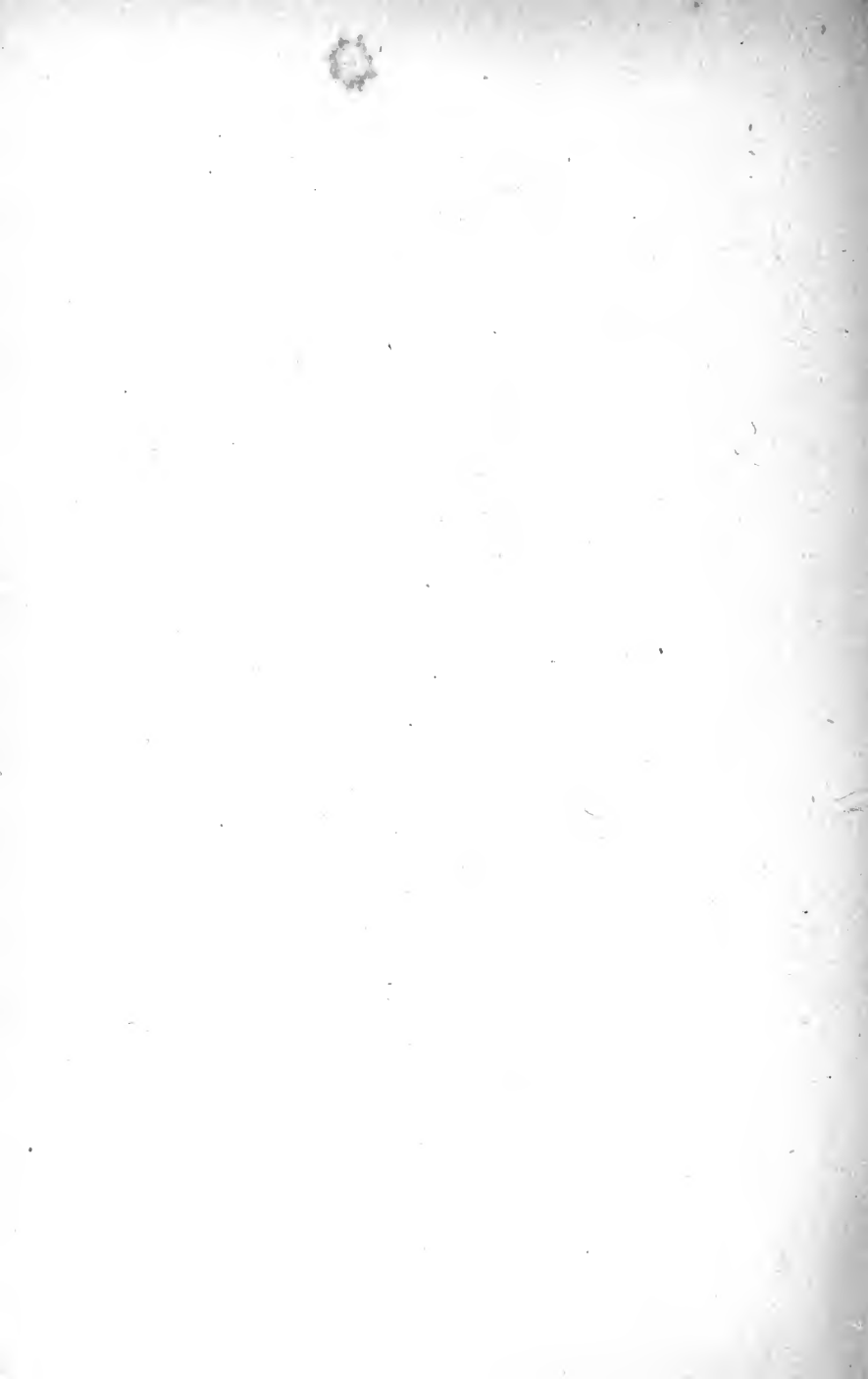
Mr. Bancroft modestly contented himself with the small part of the Prince of Morocco in

the notable Prince of Wales's revival of *The Merchant of Venice*, on April 17th, 1875, contriving, as with everything else he touched, to endue it with a certain importance. Admirably as the play was mounted, and, for the most part, acted, it only held the stage for thirty-six performances, to be succeeded by a revival of *Money*, and on June 19th Mr. Bancroft proved his comedy power again at a *matinée* performance of Mr. Honeyton in Theyre Smith's delightful comedietta *A Happy Pair*.

Mr. Bancroft's next impersonation of importance revealed a pathos and a power of which many of those who had only seen him in Robertsonian comedy did not suspect him capable, and compelled playgoers to recognise in him something beyond and better than an absolutely modern school actor, capable only of representing types of his own world and period. Triplet, in the Prince of Wales's revival of *Masks and Faces* on November 5th, 1875, proved one of the most artistic pieces of work yet done by the actor. Mr. Bancroft's thoughtful and delicate method was brought to bear with delightful effect upon the representation



MR. BANCROFT AS "TRIPLET" IN "MASKS AND FACES."



of the pathetic, beautiful figure of the half-starved musician—so tender, so exquisitely refined in every instinct, with so great a heart, so sensitive a soul in his bowed and shrunken frame—and the result was a Triplet of rare tenderness and dignity, with whom one laughed the kindest laugh of all, that which is born while sympathetic tears are in the eyes. In a sense this was the most valuable part Mr. Bancroft had as yet essayed before a London audience, as its artistic possibilities were so great, and it was all the more gratifying that he developed these potentialities to the utmost under the difficult condition of being handicapped by identification with a class of characters which, in their faultlessly-dressed, well-fed, languid, nonchalant nineteenth-century swiftness, formed the most vivid contrast to the pinched, threadbare dignity of the shabby broken-down gentleman—author, actor, and artist—whose ill-starred fortunes could not mar his innate sweetness and artistic refinement of character, and who could be tender with his sick wife and tolerant of his noisy crew of children, while his own heart was bruised and aching

and sick with hope deferred well-nigh to the point of despair. Mr. Bancroft's Triplet was profoundly moving, the half-broken heart pulsing in every tone of the voice, and the forced smiles and hysterical gaiety, infinitely sadder than tears, revealing the nature and condition of the man with an art as delicate as it was convincing and complete.

On Thursday, April 13th, 1876, Mr. Bancroft appeared as Bob Blewitt, in Byron's ill-fated piece *Wrinkles*, speaking countless smart things with admirable humour ; but the play only ran eighteen nights, and was followed by a revival of *Ours*.

In *Peril*, an excellent adaptation of Sardou's *Nos Intimes*, by Messrs. B. C. Stephenson and Clement Scott, the first adaptation from the French produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre under the management of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, Mr. Bancroft figured to advantage as Sir George Ormond, and in the crucial scene with his wife he was manly, tender, and in every respect the *beau idéal* of an English gentleman. The production was a great success, and although it was first given on September 30th, 1876, it

was not until March 31st, 1877, that Mr. Bancroft appeared as Dazzle in a production of *London Assurance*—a most admirable piece of acting, full of devil-may-care impudence, and quite one of the best things he had done.

From September 29th, until the end of the year Mr. Bancroft appeared as Blenkinsop in Tom Taylor's comedy *An Unequal Match*, and on Saturday, January 12th, 1878, he created with

immense success the rôle of Count Orloff in *Diplomacy*, the English adaptation of Sardou's *Dora*, by Messrs B. C. Stephenson and Clement Scott. In the part of Count Orloff, Mr. Bancroft had one magnifi-



MR. BANCROFT AS COUNT ORLOFF
IN "DIPLOMACY."

cent opportunity for the exhibition of that "reserved force" and indicated rather than expressed emotion which is one of the most conspicuous and admirable features of his dramatic method; and in the great *scène des trois hommes*, which is the crucial point of the play, he acted with a quiet power, a perfectly

modulated passion, which were the perfection of art, and stamped him once and for all as an actor of the first rank. Mr. Bancroft succeeded in completely merging his own strongly marked personality in that of the Russian Count, and made a conspicuous success with a minimum of opportunity in a part which he himself prefers to any of his impersonations.

On January 11th, 1879, Mr. Bancroft resumed his impersonation of Captain Hawtree, in a revival of *Caste*, and towards the end of the season appeared successfully as Harry Spreadbrow and Sir Henry Spreadbrow in Mr. W. S. Gilbert's dainty little idyl *Sweethearts*, one of the tenderest, prettiest prose-poems in the literature of the English stage; and subsequently as Harry Collier in *Good for Nothing*.

Before leaving the Prince of Wales's Theatre for the Haymarket, Mr. Bancroft reappeared as Hugh Chalcot in a revival of *Ours*, and the familiar but perennially popular play sufficed to make the final season a success.

It was on Saturday, January 31st, 1880, that Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft entered upon their

tenancy of the Haymarket Theatre, and revived in excellent style Lord Lytton's comedy *Money*, Mr. Bancroft resuming his part of the flaxen-haired Sir Frederick Blount. The occasion was notable for more reasons than one, the abolition of the pit by the new management giving rise to a serious disturbance when the curtain went up, which lasted for twenty minutes, and had to be faced not by Mr. Bancroft *in propria personâ*, but by Sir Frederick Blount, who, despite his effeminate, foppish outside, proved by his admirable imperturbability and patience that he had the making of a man in him after all. The play itself was entirely successful, and filled the theatre until the revival, on May 1st, of *School*, with Mr. Bancroft in his original part. In November the successful run of *School* was resumed, and Mr. Bancroft also appeared as Mr. George Clarke, C. B., the travelled bachelor, in *The Vicarage*; and on February 5th, 1881, *Masks and Faces* was revived, Mr. Bancroft alternating his touching and delicate study of Triplet with a carefully elaborated and amusing impersonation of Colley Cibber.

The Haymarket revival of Tom Taylor's *Plot and Passion*, on November 26th, 1881, was not too successful, but Mr. Bancroft's rendering of Joseph Fouché, Duke of Otranto, was admitted to be an artistic and finished conception of the part; and on January 19th, 1882, he resumed his arduous *rôle* of Hugh Chalcot in the revival of *Ours*, in which Mrs. Langtry commenced her first series of appearances as a professional actress.

On Tuesday, April 25th, 1882, the English version of Sardou's *Odette* was produced in a most elaborate way, and proved an instant success, Mr. Bancroft giving force and distinction to the *rôle* of Lord Henry Trevene, and adding a notable figure to his catalogue of dramatic creations.

Tom Taylor's comedy *The Overland Route* was produced at the Haymarket on October 7th, 1882, with Mr. Bancroft as Tom Dexter, in which character he again won the favour of the public; and the year 1883 found the player in his old part of Captain Hawtree in a revival of *Caste*, on January 20th, the final performance of which, on April 13th, was

the occasion of a quite remarkable demonstration on the part of a crowded audience. A final brief revival of *School* followed, and on May 5th Mr. Herman Merivale's version of Sardou's *Fédora* was produced, with immense success, Mr. Bancroft giving a polished and well thought out rendering of Jean de Siriex, a French diplomatist, his *distingué* style standing him in good stead in a *rôle* demanding personal qualifications of a high order. The resumption of the piece on September 29th was attended by a circumstance which lent it peculiar interest. Mr. Bancroft assumed for the first time the *rôle* of Count Loris Ipanoff, and there was considerable curiosity to see how he would acquit himself in a part directly opposed to the class of character with which he was identified. Those who were familiar with the lights and shades of Mr. Bancroft's acting were tolerably sanguine that his new impersonation would be a success, and the event justified their confidence, for, if there were some faults in Mr. Bancroft's new assumption, there were also flashes of brilliant acting which fully atoned for them.

The impression conveyed by Mr. Bancroft's appearance, voice, and gestures in the earlier scenes was that, probably unintentionally, possibly unconsciously, he was reproducing some of the mannerisms of another distinguished player—the melodramatic stride, the peculiar inflexion and studied hoarseness of the voice, and certain tricks of hand and head, having apparently strayed from the neighbourhood of the Strand to the stage of the Haymarket. But, as he warmed to his work, Mr. Bancroft threw off these peculiarities, and displayed the power which he had in reserve. Throughout the second act Mr. Bancroft was good, but in the third he was something more—his delineation of passion, despair, a wild desire for vengeance, and an absorbing love, being a masterly piece of acting. In a drama like *Fédora*, where everything is so highly pitched, and where the passion is so intense as to at times appear unnatural, the over-accentuation of any detail may prove an element of grave danger, and once or twice Mr. Bancroft ventured perilously near the boundary which divides the sublime from the

ridiculous ; but he grasped so completely and portrayed with such consummate ability the intense passion and agony of the situation, that his Loris Ipanoff was justly accepted as one of his most artistic successes.

When Mr. Pinero's clever, curious comedy, *Lords and Commons*, was produced at the Haymarket on November 14th, 1883, Mr. Bancroft, made up in remarkable fashion with a long orange-hued beard, was scarcely recognised at first in the character of Tom Jervoise ; but the actor's voice and manner soon revealed his identity, and he received a cordial welcome, quickly justified by his admirable acting in the part.

After a successful run of eighty nights, *Lords and Commons* gave place to a revival of *Peril*, with Mr. Bancroft as Dr. Thornton, a rôle acted with energy and a shrewd perception of the possibilities of the part, which he developed to the uttermost.

On May 3rd, 1884, *The Rivals* was revived, with Mr. Bancroft as Faulkland, and ran with some success.

The farewell season was devoted chiefly to

the revival of plays in which Mr. Bancroft and his brilliant wife had won popular success.

Perhaps the most notable of these, inasmuch as Mr. Bancroft appeared for the first time as Henry Beauclerc instead of Count Orloff, was that of *Diplomacy*, on November 8th, 1884, the distinction and *autorité* demanded by such a *rôle* being manifested by Mr. Bancroft with a quiet force which few other living actors could have brought to bear upon a part calling for certain very special and rare qualities. The manner and bearing of the new Henry Beauclerc—diplomat, polished man of the world, kindly elder brother, lenient critic of poor humanity—were perfect, inspiring a regard and esteem, even a confidence and affection, which made it easy to understand the influence which men of that calibre can and do exert with unobtrusive but resistless force.

Not even the epidemic of Russophobia current at the time, however, combined with the admirable acting of Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, sufficed to galvanise *Ours* into a great success on the occasion of its revival in April 1885, the episodes which in the old days were

received with enthusiasm failing to arouse any marked degree of interest, and the weakness of the Shendryn sub-plot, and the ridiculous improbability of the hut scene in the Crimea, in which—waiving the unlikelihood of such a foregathering—we see women who have fainted with emotion at the mere departure of the troops indulging in pantomimic antics with curious levity upon the actual battle-field, seemed more obtrusive than usual. But the revival certainly served to remind the public that in Mr. Bancroft they would soon lose a capable actor, whose place it would be hard to fill, for in Hugh Chalcot he again gave a most admirable study of a man whose sole affliction in life is literally an *embarras de richesses*. The imperturbable *sang-froid*, the dry humour, with just sufficient cynicism to make it piquant without veiling the good-nature of the man, the quaint lamentations over his wealth, the delight of finding a woman who loved him for himself, were brought out to perfection, and new reason was given for playgoers to regret the impending loss of an actor whose powers were ripening to such perfection.

But the farewell night, July 20th, 1885, proved beyond all doubt the high position which Mr. Bancroft had secured in the opinion of the playgoing public. The Prince and Princess of Wales and a great representative crowd of London society gathered together to do honour to Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft, and the occasion proved one to be long memorable in the annals of the stage; while the programme comprised the names of a remarkable company of representative actors and actresses. Mr. Bancroft appeared in his exquisitely pathetic *rôle* of Triplet, with Mrs. Bancroft as Peg Woffington, and subsequently delivered with admirable effect a farewell address, and "Valedictory Ode," conceived by Mr. Clement Scott with excellent taste.

After so definitive a farewell to the stage as that taken by Mr. and Mrs. Bancroft upon that memorable night, the playgoing public learned with some surprise that upon the occasion of the revival of *The Dead Heart* at the Lyceum, on October 28th, 1889, the *rôle* of the Abbé Latour would be undertaken by Mr. Bancroft. The rumour was at first

received with some incredulity, but, to the satisfaction of playgoers, it proved to be well founded, and in due course they had the pleasure of giving a cordial welcome to an old favourite whom they had scarcely hoped to see again.

Possibly the warmth of his reception, and the knowledge that a great deal would be expected of him, combined with a comparative strangeness to the ordeal of the footlights which so prolonged an absence had involved, shook the actor's nerve, for at first his Abbé was not completely satisfying. The callous, cynical man of the world was there, polished and refined as Mr. Bancroft knew so well how to make him, but for a while there was too much repose, a too persistent painting of the character in monochrome, a plentiful lack of animation. Beneath the imperturbable surface it was not difficult for the critical few to discern all the fierce hate, cynical falseness, and patrician courage of the man; but to a superficial observer the Abbé seemed at first but a colourless creation of only moderate interest.

But when the actor had got acclimatised

once more to the enervating atmosphere of stage-land, all his old talent was perceptible. With many a subtle touch he made the Abbé an embodiment of aristocratic disdain, refined villainy, heartless cynicism, absolute self-love, while in the great duel scene he evolved a power, a *finesse*, a splendid courage which took the house by storm, and redeemed whatever weakness might have preceded it. From first to last the impersonation was marked by refinement and distinction, and in the duel scene it rose to the height of tragedy,—the moment in which he dragged the handkerchief, stained with blood, from his breast, being just one of those touches which remain in the memory, and compel an audience to recognise the presence of talent of a very high order. That one tragic episode, combined with the passionate intensity of the whole of the duel scene, and the perfect refinement of the conception and rendition of the part throughout, rendered Mr. Bancroft's Latour a notable impersonation, and his return to the stage the subject of general congratulation.

Mr. Bancroft is very popular off the stage, and his charming house in Berkeley Square is

the scene of much pleasant hospitality, both Mr. Bancroft and his clever wife thoroughly understanding the art of entertaining their guests to perfection. Mr. Bancroft's judgment, in all matters connected with his profession, is so highly valued that, on more than one occasion, he has acted successfully as arbitrator between dramatic authors and managers who could not agree as to the acceptance or rejection of dramas ; and his ready wit was amusingly exemplified in a romantic dispute in the law courts in 1881, when he was summoned as a witness and questioned as to what could or could not terminate the run of a piece. The following little specimen of a word-duel is worthy of the stage :—

COUNSEL.—“ But supposing your leading actress was injured coming down to the theatre, you would be compelled to close the doors ? ”

MR. BANCROFT.—“ Such a thing would be impossible in a well-conducted theatre.”

COUNSEL.—“ How so ? ”

MR. BANCROFT.—“ She would be understudied.”

COUNSEL (*a happy thought*).—“ But supposing

by some miracle the under-study was in the same cab with her and both were injured: what then?"

MR. BANCROFT (*unabashed*).—"I should send on the Prompter!"

This absolute imperturbability is distinctly characteristic of the popular actor, and has had not a little to do with his pronounced and persistent success, "on and off the stage."





Yours truly
J. L. Toole

JOHN LAWRENCE TOOLE.

MOST men are born babies, but Mr. Toole must have been born a comedian. It is not absolutely on record that he made puns between his spoonfuls of pap, or lisped out a request for a comic wig in preference to waiting for Nature to do her work in her own way, but the late Edward Laman Blanchard used to delight in telling how, in the course of a country walk, as long ago as the year 1838, he chanced upon a small boy of five or six years old, who, having been sent into pastures new for his health, had so speedily acquired a sense of "local colour," that he was entertaining a select audience of other small folk with a series of quite wonderful imitations of farmyard birds and animals, with humorously interjected human voices, the mimetic power displayed auguring well for the future talent

of the precocious performer, Master Johnny Toole.

The son of a City toast-master, and accustomed, in the intervals of consuming infantile portions of those items in the *menu* which represent the sweetness and light of lordly banquets in the civic halls, to study human nature from the cosy security of a screened corner or quiet gallery, John Lawrence Toole had ample opportunity for storing up in his receptive and reproductive mind a host of odd impressions, to be used in after years with excellent effect; and when, as a youth, he relieved his diurnal labours at "the desk's dead wood" in the office of a wine-merchant by nocturnal performances as an amateur actor at Sussex Hall, Leadenhall Street, as a member of the City Histrionic Club, his love of acting rapidly developed into a ruling passion, only to be fully gratified at last by the adoption of the stage as a career; and his resolve, made nearly forty years ago, has afforded an incalculable amount of innocent pleasure to tens of thousands of people, while no doubt the comedian has himself been happier than had he

become ever so rich and famous as the proprietor of "Toole's Griffin B Sherry" or celebrated "Guildhall Port" at twenty-four shillings a dozen—bottles included.

Whimsicality, quaintness, and a boldness of delineation which sometimes breaks through the boundary which divides character-drawing from caricature, have been the dominant elements in Mr. Toole's acting as long as playgoers of the period can remember. His artistic method is to the stage not wholly unlike that associated in the popular mind with the name of George Cruikshank in another field of art. In the works of both, especially when Mr. Toole's creations are judged simply as stage figures and estimated for their pictile quality, there is much the same freehanded treatment, much the same inoffensive *grotesquerie*, much the same whimsical exaggeration of characteristic features of physique and dress.

But exaggeration is not without its value in either the art of the worker with the pencil and the brush, or of the actor who uses his very self to body forth his idea of a character.

The caricaturist, on or off the stage, if he be of the first rank, recognises the imperative axiom that it is the business of his peculiar method to heighten, not to disfigure or destroy, the individuality of a subject, and it is indisputable that in the case of George Cruikshank and of John Lawrence Toole each has made his creations the more striking and memorable by this artistic and legitimate utilisation of exaggeration. Cruikshank's Artful Dodger or Fagin, and Toole's Caleb Plummer or Dodger or Dick Dolland, exhibit very much the same degree of exaggeration, and it is unquestionable that all the figures make a far clearer and more enduring impression than would have been possible had the artist or the actor permitted himself to be strictly trammelled by the limits of actuality. But with both, too, there was always one clearly apparent condition—the original conception upon which they worked was based upon a keen and true insight into human nature. Without that they might have explored the artistic field from Dan to Beersheba, and still it would have proved barren of worthy fruit.

Mr. Toole, moreover, is an actor of no mean versatility. He has not yet, it is true, given to the stage a new Hamlet or an ideal Romeo; sentiment and romance of the higher or of the more conventional school are not within his range; neither for him is the passion or despair of pure tragedy. But in the field of domestic life and every-day joys and sorrows he is a thorough master of his art, and is equally effective with the *piano* pedal of pathos hard down as with the *forte* of boisterous farce. He can make his audience laugh with him and weep with him at will, and, even in his broadest and wildest farcical extravagances, while they roar at his comic bewilderment, for very good-fellowship they wish him well out of his scrapes.

Mr. Toole is a thorough comedian and *bon camarade*, through and through, hence his extreme popularity in the profession and with the public. He is not cast in the heroic mould, but very little of the downright useful work of the world is done by heroes, and so it is with the drama. Who shall compute the pleasure given and pure sympathy evoked by Mr. Toole in his

comical and pathetic moments ; and although he may not have attained the dignity of a Charles I., the intellectual, melancholy charm of Hamlet, or the romantic picturesqueness of Claude Melnotte, he may well console himself with the reflection that few living actors have stimulated more the harmless enjoyment, honest pathos, and wholesome merriment of the public.

There is nothing malicious about the class of humour with which Mr. Toole is identified on or off the stage. The laughter which he evokes has no bitterness in it. Its ring is true as eighteen-carat gold, its source as honest as the day. In his most whimsical facial make-up there are many merry lines but no mean ones. The physiognomist would search in vain for danger-signals, but might discover plenty of indications of extravagant humour. With tears and laughter equally at his command, it is not surprising that Mr. Toole should be a prime favourite with audiences who appreciate above all else humour that is careful to keep "within the limits of becoming mirth," and when the inevitable day comes when the sock and buskin can no longer be donned by him,

there will be tens of thousands who have enjoyed countless happy hours, thanks to his excellent talent, and who have learned to honour him alike as a man and an actor, to speak the kindly aspiration, "God rest his soul! He was a merry man!"

In his private life, too, if so well-known a public personage can fitly be said to have any private life, Mr. Toole has always been ready for a harmless joke, such as the little jest he played upon Mrs. Bancroft when, as Marie Wilton, a nervous slip of a girl, she was playing at the Lyceum in the same company as the comedian, and he made her, after many anxious inquiries as to the date and mysterious hints of something coming, a birthday present, wrapped up with infinite care in many thicknesses of silvery tissue paper, from which at last emerged—not a bracelet, as the youthful actress had hoped, but—a Tangerine orange! But Mr. Toole soon made up for the disappointment; and it was largely due to his encouraging and comical whisper to the timorous little actress at rehearsal, "Twenty pounds a week insisted upon, I think, after the first performance," that

she found courage to fight her way bravely to the front.

To children Toole has always been particularly kind, and the gusto with which he tells the semi-pathetic, semi-humorous story of the little girl who played Tiny Tim, and apparently



devoured an alarmingly large share of Bob Cratchit's Christmas goose—upon which, as a fact, the members of the family feasted each night right

royally—proves how big a heart he has, and how tenderly susceptible it is to the claims and needs of childhood.

Mr. Toole, who is a thorough Londoner even when upon the stage, was born in St. Mary Axe, on March 12th, 1832, and speedily showed signs of possessing that mimetic faculty which is essential to comic acting of the best school. He was only twenty

when, after a brief provincial apprenticeship, (having made his first appearance on the regular stage in Ipswich,—the birthplace of Mrs. Keeley,—as Sylvester Daggerwood, appearing, moreover, not as J. L. Toole but as John Lavers, a detail which is significant as proving that he had not then finally decided upon the stage as a career) he made his first appearance before a Metropolitan audience on July 22nd, 1852, upon the stage of the Haymarket Theatre, in a part which he first played at the Queen's Theatre, Dublin, and has played since times out of number, with unvarying success—that of Simmons, in *The Spitalfields Weaver*, in which rôle his whimsical humour and distinct individuality of style were quickly recognised as full of promise.

On October 2nd, 1854, Mr. Toole played the part of Sam Pepys, in *The King's Rival*, by Tom Taylor and Charles Reade, at the St. James's Theatre, appearing the same evening in a farce by Charles Selby, *My Friend the Major*, impersonating a sheriff's officer who is in a gentleman's house ostensibly as a friend, and has some comical experiences at a ball, with a

jovial humour which speedily made its mark. During the same engagement Mr. Toole played Pierre, in *Honour before Titles*, with success.

From 1856 until 1859 Mr. Toole was a member of the Lyceum company, playing during his engagement such parts as Fanfaronade in *Belphegor* and Autolycus, in William Brough's amusing burlesque, *Perdita; or, The Royal Milkmaid*, and also gaining considerable favour by his vivacious and original acting as the hero of a farce called *Doing the Hansom*.

In 1859 Mr. Toole migrated to the new Adelphi Theatre under Benjamin Webster's management, and during his engagement had opportunities of displaying his talent in impersonating the heroes of eccentric comedy and farce, of which he eagerly availed himself. It was during this engagement that Mr. Toole created among other distinctly original and striking parts that of Asmodeus in the burlesque of that name, and Mr. Spriggins, in the still popular farce, *Ici on parle Français*—a character which has perhaps been the cause of more hearty laughter than any other in the actor's



MR. TOOLE AS CALEB PLUMMER.

répertoire; Augustus de Rosherville, the eccentric hero of *The Willow Copse*; and Wapshot in *The Life of an Actress*; while he gave proof of an almost Robsonian genius for blending homely humour with simple pathos in the parts of Bob Cratchit in *The Christmas Carol* and Caleb Plummer in *The Cricket on the Hearth*. In both of these characters Mr. Toole entered into the spirit of Dickens's delightfully tender and lovably humorous creations with a thoroughness and a delicacy of style which stamped him as an actor of the first degree of merit in his own school, capable of manifesting, when occasion arose, a simple pathos which went straight from heart to heart, and formed an indissoluble link of the pleasantest sort between the actor and his audience. Mr. Toole's Bob Cratchit and Caleb Plummer were, and are, an education in the art of painting the pathos and humour of humble life with a kindly and faithful touch, and the intense, real, living humanity of both characters won for the comedian immediate and enduring favour.

During the same year Mr. Toole created the part of William Kite in Watts Phillips' *Paper*

Wings, and appeared at Drury Lane as Enoch Flicker in a drama by the same author, called *A Story of '45*, transforming a comparatively insignificant part into *the* attraction, *par excellence*, of a successful play. In 1864 the comedian added to his reputation by his rendition of the principal character in Messrs. Brough and Halliday's lively farce, *The Area Belle*, in which he introduced that extraordinary effusion, "A Horrible Tale," which quickly took the taste of the town, and was sung, decades later, by Mr. Toole, into the receiving cylinder of a phonograph, the actor remarking afterwards to a friend, "How will that do?" an epilogue faithfully stored up by the instrument, to be reproduced in due course, although quite unintentionally added to the ditty.

In the following August Mr. Toole played the amusing part of Mr. Lysimachus Tootles in a comical piece called *My Wife's Maid*, and, a few weeks subsequently, created the part of Stephen Digges, in a piece of that name adapted for him specially by John Oxenford, from Balzac's famous novel, "Le Père Goriot," and affording the popular comedian ample scope

for displaying in the one part both his humour and his pathetic power. The development of the character was effected with masterly art, and confirmed the judgment of those who saw in Mr. Toole the most likely successor to the mantle of Robson.

On January 30th, 1865, Mr. Toole appeared successfully as Fathom in an Adelphi revival of *The Hunchback*, and in the following July he created the rôle of Joe Bright, a plucky, straightforward fireman, in Mr. Walter Gadin's play, *Through Fire and Water*, with enormous skill, shining equally in the happier scenes and in the realistic episode of drunkenness.

In May 1866 Mr. Toole took the part of Prudent in *The Fast Family*, by Benjamin Webster, jun., adapted from Sardou's "La Famille Benoiton;" and in January 1886 he created the powerful part of Michael Garner, at the New Queen's Theatre, in Byron's comedy, *Dearer than Life*. Those who are familiar with Mr. Toole's method will quickly understand how entirely such a part enabled him to show his art at its best. The honourable, worthy, self-respecting tradesman, the

affectionate husband and father stripping himself not only of his savings but of the good name which he values so highly, in order to save his son from shame, and then the pathetic pretence of high spirits when his misery was well-nigh breaking his heart,—all were represented by the actor with convincing force, and once again Mr. Toole proved that it was in the depiction of familiar experiences, with comedy and tragedy treading on each other's heels so closely as well-nigh to trip each other up, that he was to be seen at his best. It is well that we should be reminded now and again of the mirth and misery that are to be found in the most humdrum round of every-day life, and Mr. Toole in this and similar parts has brought this condition of existence to the surface in a conspicuously successful fashion.

Like Mr. Irving, who was also in the cast of this production, Mr. Toole has always been fond of going out into the highways and bye-ways of city and country, recognising odd bits of character with keen appreciation, and storing them up for future reproduction. The comedian, in particular, has always been peculiarly

fond of studying human nature with all its unconscious elements of comedy and tragedy, obscure and humble as they might be, and it is a sterling proof of his genuine kindness of heart that he has always taken care that any one upon whom he played one of the harmless practical jokes so dear to his humour-loving soul, or who had afforded him some material for future use, was never left quite unrewarded. Even when sending presents to ailing friends Mr. Toole's kind thoughtfulness for others prompted him to habitually "put in a few trifles that might be useful to the landlady." Without doubt many a struggling soul has been lightened and brightened by the actor's kind-hearted consideration.

Mr. Toole's genuine good-nature has necessarily won him an unusually large number of friends, as distinguished from mere acquaintances, who have rejoiced with him in his happiness and success, and sympathised sincerely with him in the heavy sorrows which have fallen upon him from time to time in the death of those dearer to him than life.

Whether in the old days at Haverstock Hill,

in the little house with the garden where Robson would visit him on Sunday mornings and be cheered by the sight of his young friend pottering happily about amongst his plants ; or in the pretty, cheerful house in Orme Square, facing Kensington Gardens, with its windows and balconies bright with flowers, "as who should say 'cheerfulness and fun are as the air we breathe,' " or later still, after the death of his well-loved son, in the cosy little house at No. 17, William Street, Lowndes Square, a stone's-throw from Charles Reade's "Naboth's Vineyard" at Albert Gate, with its busts of Shakespeare and Macready, its quaint old model of the "Maypole Inn," so dear to honest Gabriel Varden and his cronies, its countless souvenirs and tributes of affection and admiration from other artists, including a dainty, tender Thames study by Joseph Jefferson, the immortal "Rip," books, statuettes, relics of Charles Dickens, and general artistic litter of interesting and beautiful things, Mr. Toole's private life has always been the same—hospitable, honest, kindly, and that of a man whose home was, after all, his chief happiness.

At the Queen's Theatre, in July 1868, Mr. Toole impersonated Bob Acres with artistic moderation and in a spirit of true comedy, and in the following year he played Jack Snipe in Watts Phillips' drama, *Not Guilty*, and on December 13th, 1869, at the Gaiety Theatre in Byron's *Uncle Dick's Darling*, a play specially written for him, he created the part of Dick Dolland with unqualified success. It would not be easy to surpass the cleverness of the antithetic phases of the character—so jovial and full of spirits, and then so tender and so heartbroken. The affectionate devotion contrasted with the good-hearted geniality was dramatically effective to a degree, and Dick Dolland proved one of those literal transcripts of human nature which those who run may read, while the most critical students of original and copy could not detect any discrepancy worthy of note.

Mr. Toole followed up this success with a lengthened tour in the provinces, where he has always been an immense favourite, from the early days when the stage carpenter at Sheffield good-naturedly gave him the “wheeze” which

he has since used with such effect in *The Steeplechase*, "It does make me so wild!"—a phrase introduced by a predecessor in the part, and given to Mr. Toole as a friendly, and, as it proved, really valuable hint.

In November 1871 Mr. Toole made his reappearance on the London stage as Paul Pry, at the Gaiety Theatre, bringing out all the quaint, dry humour of the part with excellent art, and appearing also in *The Spitalfields Weaver*, as Simmons, one of his earliest successes. On Boxing Day of the same year, and at the same theatre, he appeared as Thespis, in Mr. Gilbert's seasonable fantasy, called *Thespis; or, The Gods Grown Old*; and in April 1872, still at the Gaiety, he created the part of Neefit, in *Shilly-Shally*, by Anthony Trollope and Charles Reade; and in December 1873 appeared as Maw-worm in a revival of *The Hypocrite*, a comically lugubrious bit of acting in which he was seen to considerable advantage.

As Hammond Cooke, in Albery's comedy, *Wig and Gown*, Mr. Toole gave a clever, if rather extravagant, sketch of a barrister, in April 1874, at the Globe Theatre, painting



MR. TOOLE AS PAUL PRY.



with rare humour the shifts and struggles of a briefless barrister, full of petty pride, who really lives by letting furnished lodgings. In 1875 he went to America, and made an extended tour with complete success.

Before his departure for America Mr. Toole was the guest of the evening at a banquet held in Willis's Rooms, on Midsummer Day 1874, under the pleasant presidency of Lord Rosebery, who even then was an excellent after-dinner speaker. Lord Rosebery must surely have unconsciously possessed the gift of prophecy on that occasion when he said of Mr. Toole, "I should like to see a series of banquets given day after day in his honour until we had exhausted all the phases of his character. Still, although that might redound to his immortal glory, I am doubtful whether it would not result in his precipitate death from indigestion." This aspiration—as regards the banquets day by day, not, happily, the premature decease from dyspepsia—was almost literally fulfilled prior to the comedian's departure for Australia, nearly sixteen years later, where Mr. Toole found so many claims upon his

time off the stage that he was often up night after night until four in the morning, withstanding the double strain with remarkable physical strength for a man of his years.

Upon the same occasion Lord Rosebery characterised Mr. Toole's humour rather curiously, as of a kind "grateful alike to age and to youth and to childhood—to the genius and to the fool" ; and, a little later, an American critic emphasised this opinion by saying, with truth, that the test which Mr. Toole met was that, under all conditions of circumstance which arouse the best emotions of average humanity, his art made him the perfect reflection of the nature of mankind. "The colour was English but the fact was universal."

In December 1875 Mr. Toole created with great success the character of Mr. Tottle, in Byron's farcical comedy, *Tottle's*, at the Gaiety Theatre. The absurd incongruities of the wealthy quondam proprietor of Tottle's refreshment rooms, Tottle's eating house, Bucklersbury, and Tottle's *à la mode* beef shop, Borough Road, proving irresistibly funny, especially in the final act, when, half beside himself with jealousy,

he plays fantastic tricks in the disguise of a waiter. Of course no such waiter could exist for five minutes in actuality without detection and expulsion, but the public do not ask Mr. Toole for realism. He is the Cruikshank, the Gavarni, the Pellegrini of the stage; and naturalism, at all events in his purely comic assumptions, would be a disappointment to those who know and like him best.

It was at the Gaiety Theatre, too, in February 1877, that Mr. Toole created the part of Mr. Spicer Rumford in Mr. Burnand's extravagantly funny play, *Artful Cards*; and his comic bewilderment and dismay when discovered at the house of the doubtful Countess Asteriski, when the police make a raid upon it as a gambling-hell, his attempts to master the mysteries of "Bolo," and his forlorn appearance in Piccadilly, in the small hours of the morning, with battered hat, trombone, and ill-fitting ulster, were humorous pictures which remain in the memory.

In the same month Mr. Toole appeared at the Gaiety Theatre as Jacques Strop, in *Robert Macaire*, indulging in the most grotesque and

fantastic business, and depicting the miserable rascal's comic despair and abject terror with exceptional vigour. The part became quite a new creation, and a remarkable one, in Mr. Toole's hands, and the humour, though wildly extravagant, was sufficiently possible to be intensely amusing.

January of 1878 saw Mr. Toole in a new part at the Globe Theatre, where he appeared as Chawles, or Charles Liqueurpond, in Byron's *A Fool and his Money*, a scheming and grotesque butler, and an even more fantastic landowner in Wales, bothered comically enough with the language and customs of the Principality—a part which Mr. Toole made very entertaining in his own way.

The Folly Theatre, which cynical people promptly dubbed "Toole's Folly," in King William Street, Strand, was opened by Mr. Toole on November 17th, 1879, with a revival of *A Fool and his Money*, and in the new theatre Chawles proved a complete success. Mr. Toole's quaint gestures and sublime assumption of self-satisfaction took the taste of the town at once, and never has the unctuous

imperturbability of a quondam autocrat of the servants' hall been more humorously portrayed.

On February 23rd, 1880, at a Covent Garden *matinée* revival of *Pickwick*, for the benefit of Mr. F. B. Chatterton, Mr. Toole gave his inimitably funny impersonation of Serjeant Buzfuz ; and on March 31st he created the humorous character of Mr. Barnaby Doublechick, in Byron's comedy, *The Upper Crust*, a part in which, as the wealthy proprietor of Doublechick's Diaphanous Soap, he overflowed with humour and human nature. Mr. Toole apparently has a peculiarly shrewd insight into the idiosyncrasies of the successful trader class and their little weaknesses, and revels in the oddity of their characters, although not infrequently lapsing into caricature. On May 21st, 1881, Mr. Toole appeared as Cecil Strutton, Esq., in *Wits and Rabbits*, a one-act dramatic absurdity by Robert Reece and Knight Summers ; in June *Artful Cards* was revived ; and on July 20th he appeared as Mr. Norton Folgate in *Over the Garden Wall*, a one-act farce by Mr. Sydney Grundy.

On November 2nd, 1880, Mr. Toole created

with success the amusing rôle of Mr. Samuel Slithery, in a farce called *The Light Fantastic*, by Henry J. Byron.

Mr. Toole appeared as Mr. Bunny in *Auntie*, on March 13th, 1882, and on the re-opening of the theatre on October 7th, reappeared as Barnaby Doublechick, and also as Mr Guffin in *Guffin's Elopement*, by Messrs. Arthur Law and George Grossmith; singing a quaintly humorous song, "The Speaker's Eye," with his usual extravagant comicality; and on October 31st created the part of Solomon Protheroe, the cobbler-schoolmaster, in Mr. Pinero's play, *Girls and Boys*, a character which in less creative hands would probably have proved rather colourless and barren.

Always successful in caricature, towards which his professional habit seemed to have a natural bent, Mr. Toole was seen to great advantage as Loris Ipanoff Atiloff, Commander of the Reserve Forces, in *Stage Dora: or, Who killed Cock Robin?* a travestie of *Fédora*, by Mr. Burnand, produced at Toole's Theatre on May 26th, 1883, in which the comedian parodied the make-up, voice, and style of Mr. Coghlan

with singular accuracy of perception and indisputable humour; and on February 14th, in the following year, he displayed an equal power of good-humoured travesty as Clawdian Andlivates, an “evergreen chappie,” in Mr. Burnand’s burlesque, *Paw Clawdian; or, The Roman Awry*, in which, as a classic masher, in toga, sandals, and white satin opera hat, and also in—it would scarcely be adequate to say with—a wonderful wax Roman nose as palpably false as any souvenir of Epsom Races, he was exceptionally funny. Though the nose was the nose of Barrett, the legs were the legs of Toole, and Mr. Toole’s Clawdian possessed the humour of a caricature by “Ape.” Between these successful parodies he had created the part of Kerosine Tredgold, in Mr. Law’s farcical comedy, *A Mint of Money*; but neither the play nor the character proved to possess any striking novelty of conception, and Mr. Toole was funny in his own way, and that was all.

On December 6th, 1886, Mr. Toole created the part of David Trott, in Mr. and Mrs. Herman Merivale’s domestic comedy, *The*

Butler, his dry humour enabling him to make a good deal out of a quaintly conceived and clearly delineated character of the kind in which he is seen to great advantage. At Miss Amy Roselle's benefit at the Lyceum on June 16th, 1887, Mr. Toole gave his capital impersonation of Spriggins in *Ici on parle Français*.

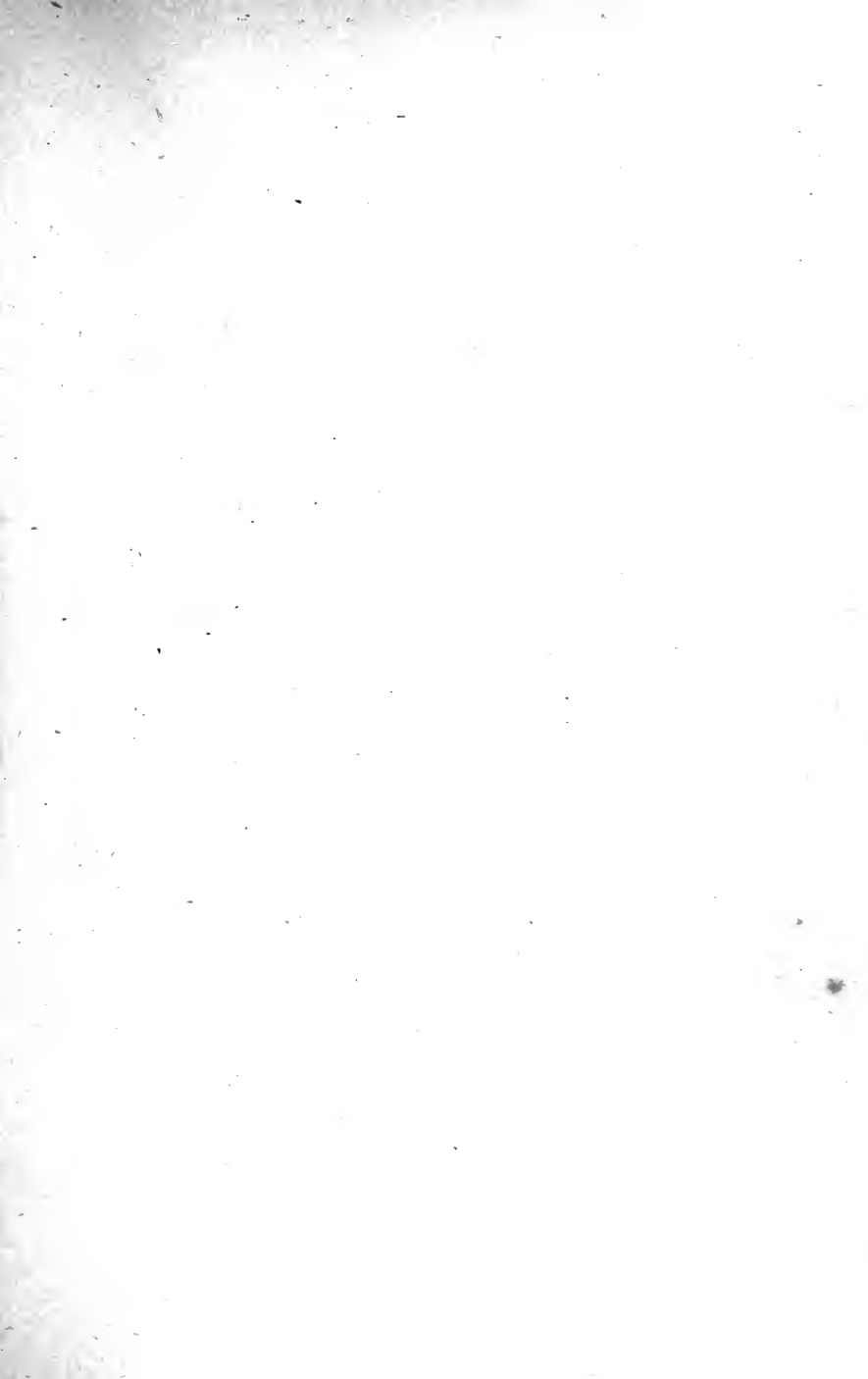
It is not difficult to understand that with such a part as Mr. Millikin, M.A., in Mr. and Mrs. Herman Merivale's *The Don*, produced on March 7th, 1888, Mr. Toole would display infinite humour, blended with a genial simplicity as irresistible as it was cleverly assumed. Mr. Millikin's inflammability as regards the fair sex was the *motif* of much amusing acting, and the part became one of the comedian's drollest and best. The play was revived on December 26th, after Mr. Toole's provincial tour, with renewed success, running again until the close of the season of 1889, on July 6th.

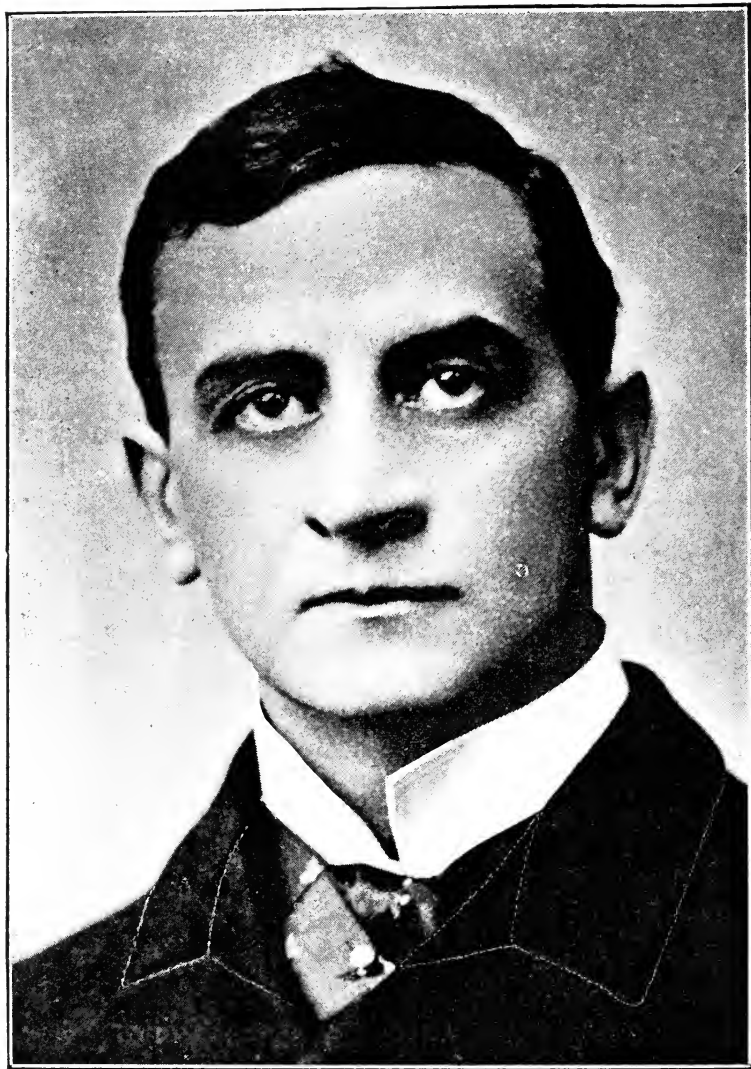
Before going to Australia on February 15th, 1890, Mr. Toole was the subject of well-nigh innumerable banquets, suppers, and genial gatherings expressive of goodwill. He was also

the recipient of many good wishes from friends in all classes of society, as became—not only a man who had breakfasted with Mr. Gladstone and Professor Blackie, to the accompaniment of such an elevated tone of conversation that, on leaving Downing Street, the comedian was compelled to “talk to a policeman” in order to bring himself down to the level of ordinary life; but an actor who had expressed the opinion that “if the cultured people of a city were liberal in their patronage of the drama, nothing would tend more to elevate the stage, and improve the character of the pieces performed, compelling humourists to be wholesome and pure in their fun, and the more serious dramatists to be equally true in their pathos.”

Upon the very eve of his departure, namely, on Friday, February 14th, 1890, the Prince of Wales gave a farewell dinner to Mr. Toole at the Garrick Club, amongst those present, besides the host and the principal guest, being the Duke of Fife, Lord Randolph Churchill, Lord Brooke, Sir Henry Thompson, Sir J. E. Boehm, Sir Charles Russell, Dr. Russell, Mr. F. C. Burnand, Mr. Edward Lawson, Mr.

G. A. Sala, and Mr. George Lewis. Mr. Toole subsequently went to supper at the Beefsteak Club-room at the Lyceum Theatre. He left Charing Cross on Saturday morning at 11 o'clock, Mr. Clement Scott accompanying him during the earlier part of his journey, and bidding him a final "God-speed!"





JOHN HARE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD.

PLAYERS OF THE PERIOD.

*A SERIES OF ANECDOTAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND
CRITICAL MONOGRAPHS OF THE LEADING
ENGLISH ACTORS OF THE DAY.*

BY

ARTHUR GODDARD.

With Numerous Illustrations

BY AND AFTER

"ALMA," FRED. BARNARD, ALFRED BRYAN, PHIL MAY,
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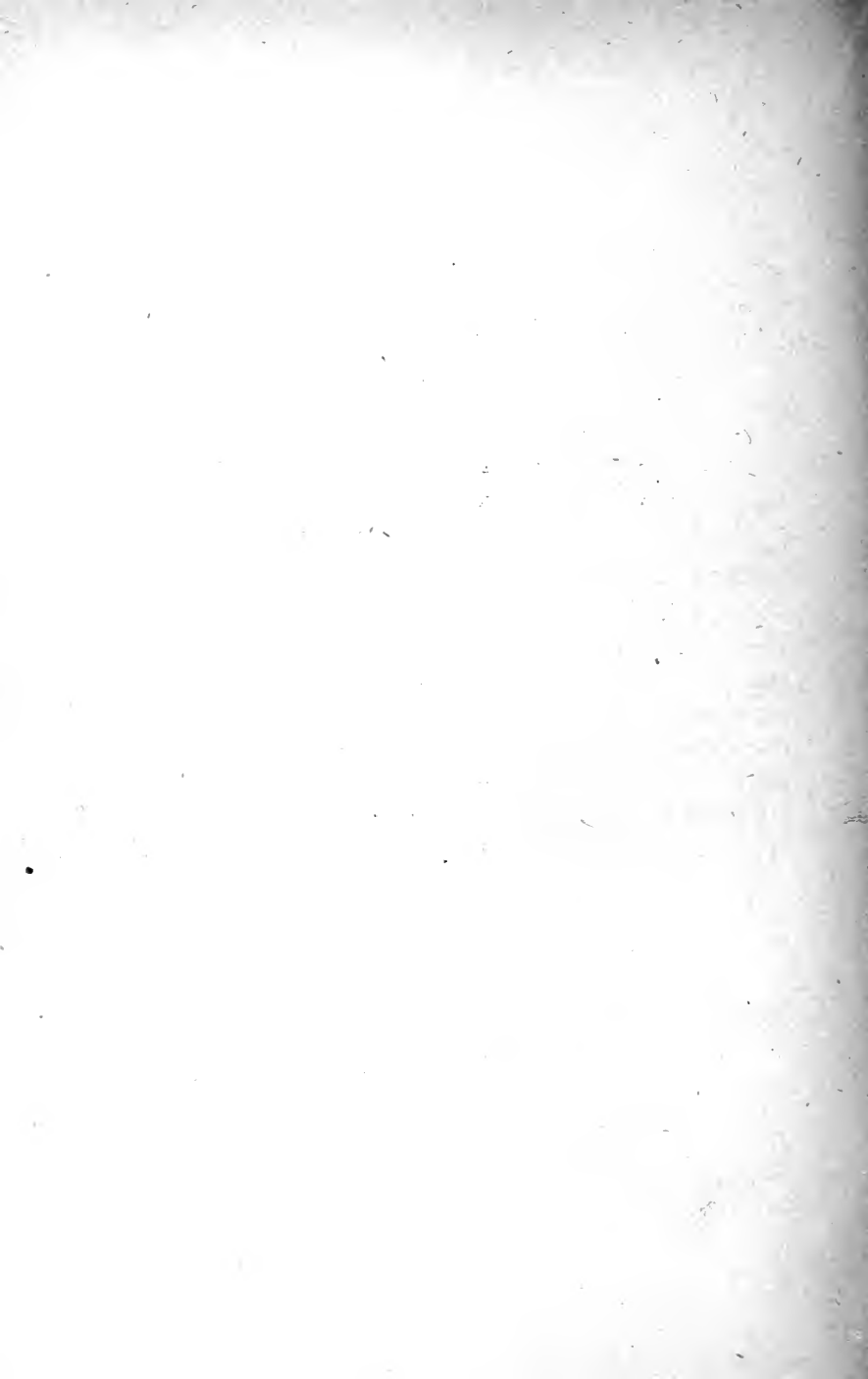
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"I would rather trust & be deceived
than suspect & be mistaken"
John Hare
(*"A Pair of Spectacles"*)

JOHN HARE.

MR. JOHN HARE, most excellent of comedians and men, is the Grand "Old Man" of the stage, not by virtue of the lapse of time, although it is a quarter of a century since he made his first appearance upon the London stage, after a provincial apprenticeship of some years, but because of the admirable, highly-finished studies of "old men" which he has given to playgoers in the course of his professional career.

Physically and psychologically Mr. Hare's "old men" are perfect. Like a skilled and careful worker in mosaic, the comedian puts together his stage-portraits with infinite care. Each almost imperceptible peculiarity of body or mind is fitted into its own place in the picture

with the delicate art of a Calandra or a Salviati; the colours are clear and permanent; the work executed with so much painstaking and persistent accuracy—here a piece and there a piece, but none without due consideration of its effect—that the gratifying result is an artistic example of dramatic *mosaic*, complete, convincing, and enduring.

It is, as the mood of the moment may make one regard it, a curious instance of the irony of Fate, or of Nature's inevitable law of compensation, that this realistic impersonator of human fossils should be, in his own proper person, one of the brightest and youngest of men off the stage; no longer, it is true, altogether a young man in years, but it is only humdrum, commonplace people who measure life by the calendar, and Mr. Hare is still in appearance and manner so youthful that it is difficult to think of him as a player who has amused the public in his own admirable manner for nearly thirty years.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Hare drifted into the class of character with which he is chiefly identified, rather than adopted it from any

personal preference ; for, as he himself has said, speaking of the destiny which has doomed him to a life of premature and perpetual old age behind the footlights, "It is too strong for you ; the public come to recognise you in a certain line of character, to look for and applaud you in it, and to almost resent your assumption of any other."

The metamorphosis of the youthful-looking actor, so slim, agile, bright-eyed, and quick of speech and gesture, into the battered old *roué* or benevolent old uncle or guardian or what not of the stage, is often quite remarkable ; and Mr. Hare's mastery of the art of making-up with a crisp realism in which every line of the pencil and every touch of rouge or bismuth has its value and its peculiar significance, has had not a little to do with his success. A shrewd, microscopic perception of *minutiæ*, whether in the fashioning of the face or the bodying forth in action of the mental peculiarities of a character, has always been a conspicuous and invaluable factor in Mr. Hare's dramatic method ; and whether it was in the part in which he made his first success, that of the ex-Constable

Beetles in Watts Phillips' play *The Woman in Mauve*, produced in the far-off years at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Liverpool, or as Benjamin Goldfinch in *A Pair of Spectacles* to-day, at the Garrick Theatre, Mr. Hare's conscientiousness and scrupulous care in bringing his work to the most perfect degree of finish attainable has been palpably and persistently present. He has contributed a whole collection of portraits to the stage, so carefully elaborated, so artistically finished, remarkable for so nice a discrimination of infinitesimal points of difference, that, as in the whole world of nature there are no two faces absolutely identical, so in the picture-gallery of stageland, to which Mr. Hare has been so generous and so gifted a contributor, no two portraits are quite alike. It is amusing to know, on the unimpeachable authority of Mr. Bancroft, that it was in the character of Beetles that Mr. Hare, who had at a certain stage of the play to beat time vigorously with a telescope while Sothern sang, shed one by one upon the stage a number of garments used by him as padding, he flattering himself all the while that it was his in-

tentional comicality with which the audience were so delighted, until Sothern discovered the real cause of their exceptional hilarity, and whispered to Hare, "Never mind, old fellow, don't take any notice; don't look down!" which the youthful actor of course did, with the inevitable result of a precipitate plunge to the wings.

It was on September 25th, 1865, that Mr. Hare migrated from Liverpool, put a period to his provincial experiences, and appeared for the first time before a London audience as a member of the Prince of Wales's company, assuming the rôle of Short, the landlord, in *Naval Engagements*, upon which occasion that inveterate punster, Henry J. Byron, remarked to him in his dry way, "So wise to appear first of all in a part suited to you. Short figure, short name, short part; the critics will say, 'Mr. Hare, a clever young actor, made his first bow to a London audience, and was most excellent; in *Short*, perfect.'" To which Mr. Hare, with the modesty of genius, replied, "But if they don't like me?" "Then we'll re-christen the piece *Short Engagements*," retorted Byron.

In connection with this first metropolitan engagement it is curious to know that upon Mr. Hare's marriage, during his Liverpool career, he had grave thoughts of abandoning the stage and reading for a Civil Service appointment; and that it was chiefly by the urgent advice of his old tutor, a clergyman, whose years and office alike entitled his opinion to respect, that he went back to the stage, and, as events proved, thereby added so much to the wholesome pleasure of the public for so many years.

The name of Mr. Hare will for ever be associated with the brilliant success achieved by the Robertson series of comedies, a class of work for which his polished, incisive style made him peculiarly well fitted; and his first great success was made in the part of Lord Ptarmigan, a *blasé*, middle-aged personage, and a character elaborated with so much care, and played with such admirable delicacy and *finesse*, that the impersonation stamped the actor at once as a recruit of no mean promise. The *habitués* of the Prince of Wales's Theatre were not only critical and cultured, but their

imprimatur was sufficient to make a reputation; and the fact that they immediately accepted Mr. Hare as a welcome addition to the company to all intents and purposes guaranteed his future popularity; and his instant success in *Society*, on the memorable night in November 1865, was practically his first firm step upon the path to the fame which he has since so worthily earned.

It was not long, however, before the young actor was to have a more notable opportunity of revealing his artistic power and originality in two strongly contrasting parts, one of which, in particular, enabled him to display that purely mimetic power without which a tragedian may be successful, but a true and adequately equipped comedian is simply out of the question. As Prince Perovsky in *Ours* Mr. Hare succeeded in creating a part, calling for the most perfect refinement and high-bred polish of manner, with completely convincing reality. The Russian prince simply lived. It was no stage figure of tradition or convention, but an interesting personality, whose every look, word, gesture, and even feature, seemed indispensable

parts of a perfect whole. Then, as if it were specially arranged for the purpose of illustrating the actor's excellent power of merging his own identity beyond all possibility of recognition in the individuality of his stage impersonations, upon the production of *Caste*, on April 6th, 1867, Mr. Hare created the character of Sam Gerridge with absolute thoroughness, crispness, and an obviously keen comprehension of the idiosyncrasies which play so large a part in the formation of a genuine British workman. Nothing could well have been more true to nature than the shrewd, sharp workman; and Mr. Hare's reading of his trade circular to the young woman he hopes to marry was conceived in a spirit of pure comedy. The perception which noted, and the mimetic power which reproduced, the countless details of make-up, voice, and manner with such curious fidelity to nature were obviously of the highest order; and the new creation confirmed the high opinion already formed by the critics, and established Mr. Hare in the favour of the playgoing public.

It was on February 15th, 1868, that Mr.

Hare created one more Robertsonian character with success, the Hon. Bruce Fanquehere in *Play*, a cool, self-possessed man of the world, who has rather liberal notions with regard to conventional ethics, but a very strict code of honour of his own, and whose natural bias is in favour of the right, qualified by an unfailing sense of the first law of nature—a study of the proper preservation of self. Mr. Hare's rendition of this character, a type of the needy and shifty patrician, who yet never quite forgets that he at least ought to be a gentleman, was extremely artistic, the character of the man being permitted to reveal itself in a score of subtle and artistic ways.

As Beau Farintosh in *School* Mr. Hare once more scored a success. In the earlier scenes there was perhaps an unnecessarily uncompromising insistence upon the excessive artificiality of the fossil remains of a buck. The painted face, the extremely juvenile *toupee*, the gleaming teeth suggestive of an expensive dentist, the tottering yet would-be jaunty gait, the roguish ogle, and the whole affectation of swaggering juvenility, were clever to a degree,

but almost painful in their satire upon humanity, although a too faithful replica of a type to be seen in Regent Street and the Burlington Arcade after luncheon on any day in the season. For all that, the grimly humorous picture carried conviction on the face of it, and when at last the silly artifices were cast aside, and the man stood revealed in his true character—kind-hearted, affectionate, and of a quite venerable greyness—Mr. Hare displayed a genuine pathos which went straight to the heart of the audience, the more surely that it was a complete and striking contrast to the dandiacal affectation which had preceded it. Mr. Hare's study of the character was a most finished and elaborate piece of work, and Beau Farintosh stands out clearly from the host of stage-figures of the past twenty years with a striking, if not altogether pleasant, individuality. As an example of combined whimsicality and power the creation was entirely admirable, and marked one more step on the road to fame.

Another of Mr. Hare's wonderful old men was Dunscombe Dunscombe in *M.P.*, produced on April 23rd, 1870. The part was one in

which comedy and pathos were skilfully united, and in both phases of the character Mr. Hare was seen to advantage. His quiet, shrewd, undemonstrative method of revealing the very heart of a man by means of his bearing with regard to the ordinary occurrences of every-day life, had rarely been shown more clearly than in this rôle, the actor evidently feeling his histrionic and mimetic strength, and his ability to render a character-part important out of all proportion to its position in the cast of the play.

These successes were followed on May 4th, 1873, by a quiet, well-controlled impersonation of Sir John Vesey in *Money*: white-haired, pink-faced, plausible and pompous, with genial bearing but a close fist, the character became at once notable, and valuable to the action of the play in an unusual degree; a delightfully canny and kindly old Scotch ex-advocate in the person of Sir Patrick Lundie in *Man and Wife*, on February 22nd, 1873—a whimsical, warm-hearted character-sketch, finished with faultless art, to the lifting of an eyebrow and the turn of a hand; a most admirable, because essentially refined, Sir Peter Teazle on April 4th, 1874,

when Mr. Hare had the courage to think for himself, refusing to be trammelled by a certain over-emphasis of detail which tradition sanctions and conventionality only too willingly adopts, and accentuating in every way, by tone, bearing, and make-up, the essential refinement of the famous character dear to so many excellent comedians for a century past. There have been representatives of the character who have treated it rather as if the uxorious, fidgety husband had remained the commonplace Solomon Teazle, the widower with five children, of Sheridan's original scheme, who talks over with his butler his wife's extravagance, instead of the transformed and developed character—the high-bred, courteous, dignified, if rather foolish and eccentric, Sir Peter of the play as it eventually stood when Sheridan wrote on the final page of manuscript, with a sigh of relief, "Finished at last, thank God!" to which the prompter added, "Amen. W. Hopkins."

At the end of the long and successful run of *The School for Scandal*, in the autumn of 1874, Mr. Hare left the Prince of Wales's company, and embarked upon the cares of management

at the old Court Theatre, opening his campaign with Mr. Coghlan's comedy *Lady Flora*, on March 13th, 1875, in which he created the rôle of the Duc de Chavannes; and during his four years of management at that theatre, concluding on July 19th, 1879, he created, among other characters, those of Lord Kildare in *A Quiet Rubber*; Archie Hamilton in *A Scrap of Paper*, and Colonel Daunt in *The Queen's Shilling*, Mr. G. W. Godfrey's adaptation of *Le Fils de Famille*—a creation of exquisite finish and artistic completeness, in which character he re-appeared with renewed success when, on October 4th, 1879, he entered upon his second spell of management in conjunction with Mr. Kendal at the St. James's Theatre.

The joint management of the St. James's Theatre by Messrs. Hare and Kendal was a distinct gain to artistic London. For nearly nine years they produced play after play—if not always with equal success, at least invariably with equal conscientiousness and unwearying care for the interests of art; and during that period Mr. Hare won many new laurels as a comedian of the first order.

Upon the opening night of the theatre, under the part management of Mr. Hare, he appeared in two characters—his admirable Colonel Daunt, and also that of the profligate Duc de Richelieu in Mr. Val Prinsep's comedietta *Monsieur le Duc*, in which the Duc finds the heroine whom he would make one more victim of his passion to be his own daughter—an unpleasant idea for a play, no matter how deftly handled.

On March 13th, 1880, Mr. Hare gave a carefully finished impersonation of Potter in *Still Waters Run Deep*; and, after a brief revival of *The Queen's Shilling*, appeared in a revival of *The Ladies' Battle* as the Baron de Mont-richard; a part which he had represented successfully during his management of the Court Theatre. On October 9th the St. James's re-opened for the winter season with Mr. W. G. Wills's version of Douglas Jerrold's famous play *Black-eyed Susan*, under the title of *William and Susan*, and Mr. Hare appeared as the Admiral; and on January 8th, 1881, he created his memorable Baron Croodle in Mr. Pinero's comedy, *The Money Spinner*. Mr. Hare's impersonation of the disreputable old

gambler and blackleg, out at elbows, but irrepressibly impudent and vivacious, was irresistibly humorous, and kept the stage alive whenever he was *en évidence*. Make up, manner, "business," all were as artistic as Mr. Hare knows so well how to make them, and the result was a memorable creation and an original and striking addition to stage types.

Then came an excellent impersonation of Colonel Damas in *The Lady of Lyons*, and on May 28th, 1881, Mr. Hare created the part of Mr. Critchell in Mr. Godfrey's *Coralie*, an adaptation of M. Delpit's *Le Fils de Coralie*; on October 27th he appeared as Captain Mount-raffe in Robertson's comedy, *Home*; and on December 29th he created the notable figure of the Rev. Paul Dormer in Mr. Pinero's comedy, *The Squire*. The tobacco-loving, big-hearted parson was an excellent bit of character-painting, and one more example of the actor's versatility and skill in concealing his identity beneath that of the character he assumes.

After the run of *The Squire* Mr. Hare limited his responsibility to that of management—save for a friendly reappearance "for one night

only" as Sam Gerridge on the final performance of *Caste* at the Haymarket, under the Bancroft régime—until October 20th, 1883, when he reappeared, to the delight of the public, as Old Rogers in *Young Folk's Ways*, a comedy founded by Mr. W. H. Gillette and Mrs. Burnett on the latter's story of "Esmeralda." As the mild, harmless, henpecked old South Carolina planter, Mr. Hare was as faultless as he always is in his portrayal of stage old men; and his realism of manner and appearance as the gentle old soul so completely under the thumb of his shrewd, business-like wife was entirely convincing as well as delightfully humorous. If the play had been half as excellent as *Old Rogers* it would quickly have won wide and enduring favour.

On the revival of *A Scrap of Paper*, on December 20th, Mr. Hare undertook the part of Dr. Penguin, the gentleman with a passion for entomological research, and invested it with original attributes of his own creation, making it a most artistic piece of work; and then it was not until the revival of *As You Like It*, on January 24th, 1885, that Mr. Hare

reappeared on the boards, assuming with dry, quaint humour of a thoroughly Shakespearean quality the part of Touchstone, speaking the shrewd lines with excellent effect, and abstaining with the restraint of a true artist from the mouthings and antics sometimes conceived to be indispensable to an adequate rendering of the part.

In Mr. Pinero's rather unpleasant drama, *Mayfair*, adapted from Sardou's *La Maison Neuve*, and produced at the St. James's Theatre on October 31st, 1885, Mr. Hare was fitted with a part which not only enabled him to display the subtlety of his method to great advantage, but possessed the attraction of being the most lovable character in the play, and a strong contrast to the generally cynical and unpleasant tone of the drama throughout. As Nicholas Barrable, the big-hearted, whimsical, fatherly old bachelor stockbroker, Mr. Hare was seen at his best. A cheery, genial old fellow of the Cheeryble Brothers type, Nicholas Barrable, with his old-world notions, tender heart, and shrewd judgment, was quite the most sympathetic figure on the stage; and

his big-hearted benevolence to the foolish young couple who half despise him and the solid, peaceful comfort of the home which they have shared with him, was a homily in action. Always life-like and artistic, Mr. Hare was exceptionally excellent in this rôle, and Nicholas Barrable proved quite one of the most successful of his creations.

As General de Préfond in Ernest Warren's *Antoinette Rigaud*, adapted from the French of Raymond Desclandes, and produced on February 13th, 1886, Mr. Hare was incisive, keen, convincing as ever; and on May 25th he created the part of Mr. Drake in *The Wife's Sacrifice*—Messrs. Sydney Grundy and Sutherland Edwards's adaptation of *Martyre*, by Messrs. d'Ennery and Tarbé—and made the dapper little busybody of an English consul from Pondicherry a most amusing character. On October 23rd he appeared as Mr. Spencer Jermyn, a bright, horsey, lively little gentleman, in Mr. Pinero's amusing comedy, *The Hobby Horse*.

During the year 1888, the last of the Hare and Kendal joint management of the St.

James's, Mr. Hare was seen in a number of the parts in which he had won so much popularity; and his final appearance at that theatre, on July 21st, was in his admirable creation, the Rev. Paul Dormer, which remains certainly one of the best bits of character-acting which even Mr. Hare has achieved.

The scene in the auditorium, after the final fall of the curtain, was one of the most pleasing description, cordial goodwill greeting in vociferous fashion the excellent speeches made by both the managers in response to a hearty call. It was perfectly evident, from the friendly attitude of the audience, that when Mr. Hare modestly asserted that Mr. Kendal and himself had, during the nine years of management, "whilst fighting to live amidst a keen and vigorous competition, endeavoured not to forget the advancement of art in the more sordid care of theatrical management," his hearers were entirely with him.

Happily for the playgoing public, so excellent a comedian as Mr. Hare, and one so devoted to his art, was not likely to be long

absent from the stage ; and when Mrs. John Wood and Mr. Arthur Chudleigh opened the New Court Theatre, on September 24th, Mr. Hare was well to the fore as Jack Pontifex in Mr. Sydney Grundy's adaptation of *Les Surprises du Divorce*, called *Mamma*,—his whimsical despair and all-pervading horror of the serpent which annihilated the happiness of his Eden being portrayed in his own inimitable fashion, and contributing largely to the success of the play.

For some time past it had been known that Mr. Hare would, as soon as a new theatre, which was in process of construction for him in Charing Cross Road, should be completed, reassume the responsibility of management ; and the interest of playgoers was extreme when, upon the night of April 24th, 1889, the popular actor opened his new theatre, the Garrick, with a new and powerful play by Mr. Pinero, called *The Frofligate*, a remarkable work, and one worthy of inaugurating a new home of dramatic art of the calibre which might be reasonably expected from such an actor-manager. Possibly in order to be the

more free to give his attention to the thousand-and-one managerial details inseparable from the production of a new play in a new theatre with a new company, Mr. Hare contented himself with the small part of Lord Dangars. But he is in the habit of making small parts great by his masterly art, and so it proved in this case, the patrician imperturbability of the *non-chalant* peer being rendered with consummate skill, and Lord Dangars proving as cleverly conceived and conscientiously elaborated a creation as any of its predecessors.

During the run of the sumptuously staged *La Tosca*, Messrs. Grove and Hamilton's version of Sardou's great and gloomy drama, Mr. Hare contented himself with the work of management, such a production involving immense thought and labour; but eventually he made his welcome re-appearance on the stage as Benjamin Goldfinch in *A Pair of Spectacles*, produced for the first time on February 22nd, 1890.

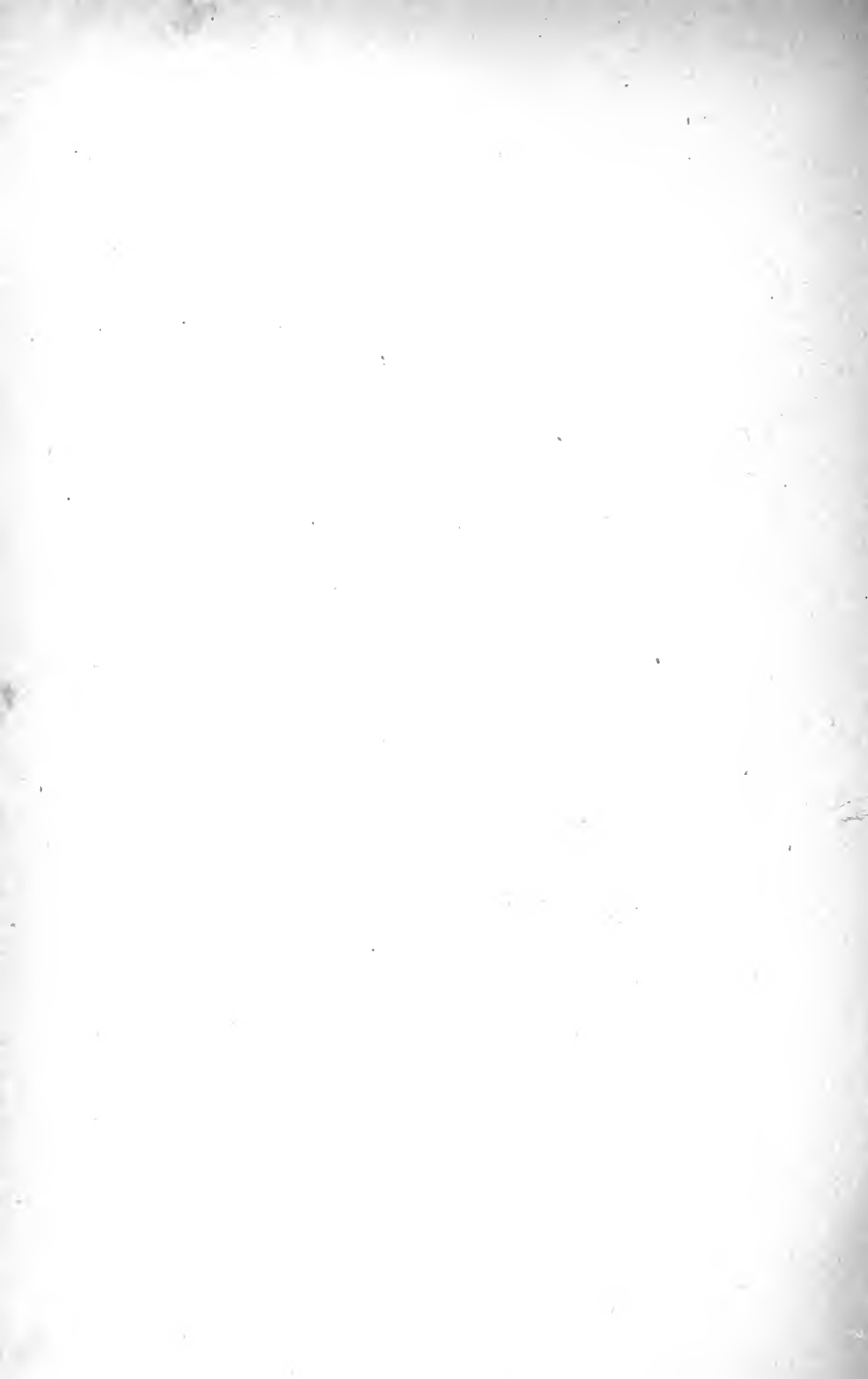
The character of the kindly, altruistic old fellow, on the best of terms with himself and all the world, brimming over with the milk

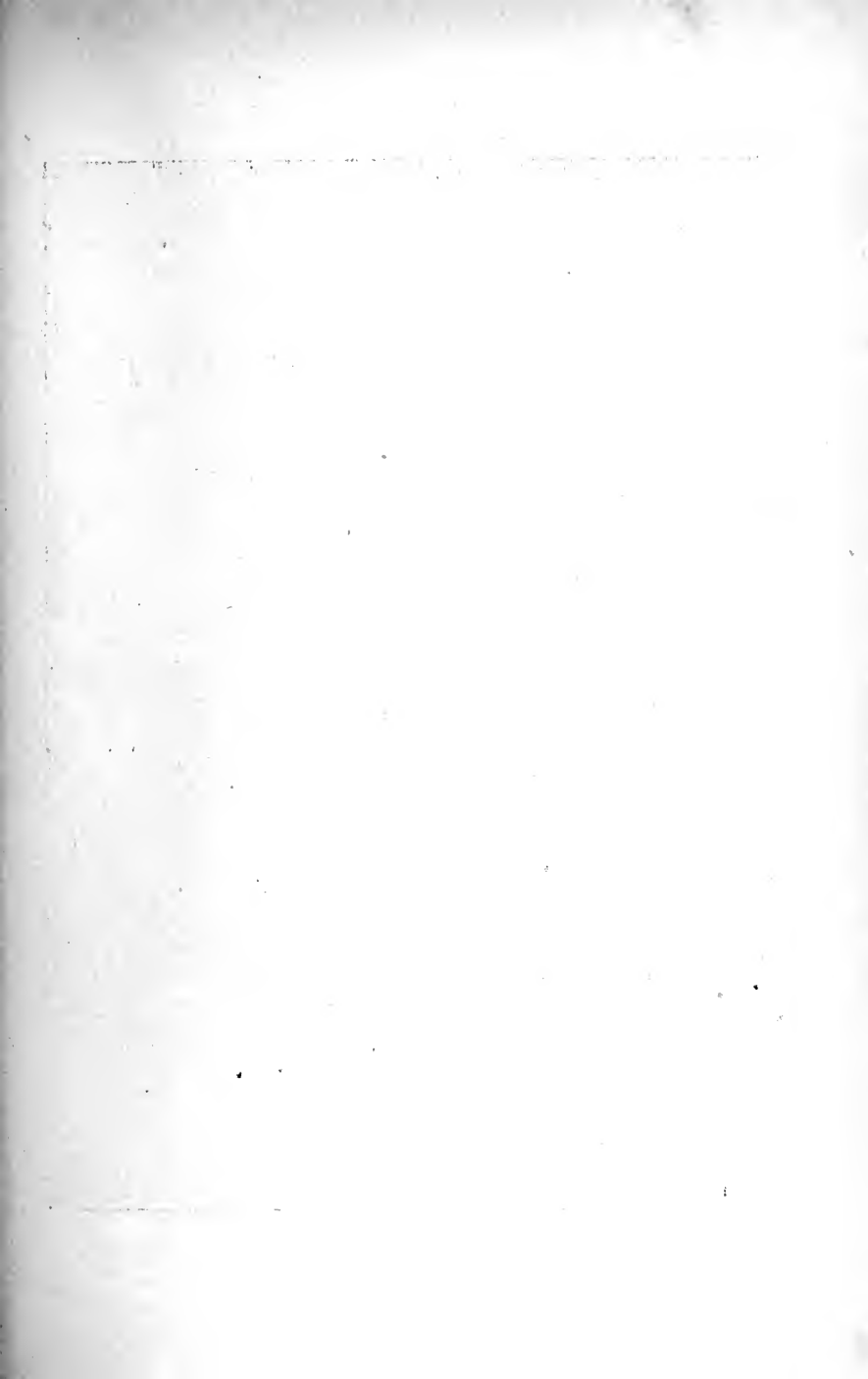
of human kindness, and as whimsically lovable as one of Dickens's immortal types of incarnate benevolence—suddenly transformed by the “spectacles” of a close-fisted, suspicious, hard-headed and hard-hearted brother from Sheffield into a suspicious pessimist, looking at everything and everybody through the gloomiest and most meanly suspicious of glasses, offered a fine opportunity of dramatic contrast; and in all the phases of a very difficult and many-sided impersonation Mr. Hare was equally natural, equally a master of the *ars celare artem*. The creation proved a remarkably effective study of the dual nature of man, as well as a most humorous and interesting figure.

Mr. Hare had the honour of appearing before the Prince and Princess of Wales at Sandringham in this part on January 8th, 1891, when their Royal Highnesses complimented him graciously and cordially, and the Prince subsequently presented to him personally at Marlborough House a valuable and charming souvenir of the visit in the form of a handsome silver cigar-box. On the top left-hand corner

of the box are the Prince of Wales's plumes and motto in gold and royal blue enamel ; on the lower right-hand corner is the head of a hare looking through a pair of gold spectacles. The inside of the cover bears the following inscription in facsimile of his Royal Highness's handwriting : " To John Hare, from Albert Edward, in remembrance of *A Pair of Spectacles* at Sandringham, January 8, 1891."

On March 7th Mr. Hare produced a new comedy by Mr. Pinero, called *Lady Bountiful*, creating in it the part of a Skimpoleish old gentleman, one Roderick Heron ; and on March 17th he had the honour of appearing, with his clever company, in *A Pair of Spectacles* and *A Quiet Rubber*, at Windsor Castle, before Her Majesty the Queen.







MR. WYNDHAM AS DAVID GARRICK. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD.

"The ear is with the eye
averse to the south"
from "David Garrick."

W. G. Thackeray

CHARLES WYNDHAM.

ALTHOUGH he has taken to the stage as heartily as the playgoing public have taken to him, and although his taste for the mimic world across the footlights manifested itself sufficiently early, Mr. Wyndham does not come of a theatrical family, and was not intended for a player. But inclination prevailed over family projects, and while the Church possibly lost a rotund rector or a dignified dean, or the medical profession a successful doctor with a charming bedside manner, the stage certainly gained a most excellent comedian.

In his own peculiar way Mr. Charles Wyndham is without a rival, and at his best without a peer. His bright, effervescent style of

comedy, as sparkling as champagne, and well-nigh as exhilarating, possesses another quality of that pleasant wine, inasmuch as it makes one good-humoured rather than critical.

The lover of good comedy, like the lover of good wine, will not care to inquire too closely into the why and wherefore of the agreeable effect which it has upon him. He feels cheered, warmed, on good terms with himself and the world, and would as soon think of pulling his favourite actor's method to pieces as a connoisseur would of analysing the amber wine as it throws up its myriad air-bubbles, as if it, too, were laughing in irrepressible lightness of heart.

Yet, as all who are familiar with Mr. Wyndham's impersonations well know, there is, too, upon occasion a "body" to his work which gives it a greater value than that of a merely pleasant means of passing an idle hour; and he has occasionally shown a vein of manly tenderness, a pathos, and a strength, of which those who have only seen him in his volatile parts would scarcely believe him to be capable.

The acting instinct, with its inevitable versa-

tility, was in Mr. Wyndham's blood ; and so strong was his determination to go upon the stage that even the family and friendly opinion that he had better be apprenticed to a chimney-sweep than follow the bent of his inclination did not turn him from his purpose. And the instinct which prompted him, after taking his diploma as a doctor, to become an actor, has been amply justified by events ; and, as Mr. Wyndham humorously says, although he passed his medical examination for love of a widow whom he did *not* marry, the knowledge then gained stood him in good stead during the American Civil War, in which he acted as a surgeon, thanks to an introduction to General Banks, given to him by Mr. P. T. Barnum, the great showman.

It was in Washington in 1864 that Mr. Wyndham made his first appearance on the stage. After a brief engagement the young actor went back to the army ; but a couple of years later the stage claimed its own again, and Mr. Wyndham came to Manchester, was favourably noticed by the critics, and, naturally expecting a salary of fifty pounds a week,

declined one of three pounds a week to share light-comedy business with Henry Irving, only to wish a month later that he could have taken the berth at two pounds.

However, it chanced that better things were in store for him, and on May 21st, 1866, he appeared at the Royalty Theatre, London, then under the management of Miss Oliver, as Sir Arthur Lascelles in *All that Glitters is not Gold*. The following year he made a palpable hit as Hugh Stoneleigh in *Idalia*; and in 1868 he was a member of the brilliant company at the Queen's Theatre, Long Acre, playing, in *Dearer than Life*, the part of Charley Garner, the prodigal—but in due time penitent—son, with much quiet power and intelligence, with such men as Toole, Lionel Brough, John Clayton, and Henry Irving also in the cast. Then he went to America again for two years, where he appeared on September 15th, 1869, at Wallack's Theatre, New York, as Charles Surface.

In October 1873, at the Royalty Theatre, Mr. Wyndham acted the part of Rolando in *The Honeymoon*, with animation and a promise

of the bright style of the future; and in December he impersonated Rover in *Wild Oats*, a character destined to prove one of his breeziest and most irresistibly spirited impersonations, a favourite alike with the comedian and the public. Then came a successful impersonation of Rabagas at the St. James's Theatre in 1874; and Bob Sackett, another animated, cheery part after the actor's own heart, enacted by him upon the production of *Brighton*, by Messrs. Bronson Howard and Frank Marshall, at the Court Theatre on May 25th, 1874, it having been originally produced at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, in December 1870, under the title *Saratoga*.

Mr. Wyndham's name will always be chiefly associated with the Criterion, which, in its turn, has obtained a reputation for the production of plays which have not quite their counterpart in any other London theatre. There is an air about them of a sort of dramatic "irresponsible frivolity," which is yet very pleasant to the playgoer who is content to be amused. Nothing is truer than *dulce est desipere in loco*, and the Criterion has won

general recognition as the place of all others in which to forget for a while how very serious a thing life is.

It is also probable that the success of the Criterion Theatre has been also due, in a considerable degree, to the Gallic flavour of many of the plays produced within its walls. There has been sometimes a certain discreet suggestion of impropriety which has titillated the public fancy, and taken them to the theatre in much the same spirit as they would take up their paper to read the report of a racy and humorous divorce or breach of promise case; but when they have gone there they have found so much excellent acting, wit, and genuine comedy that the *souçon* of impropriety has been rendered innocuous. Moreover, it has all been so bright, so airy, so frank, so amusing, that to quarrel seriously with it would be to break a butterfly upon a wheel, or to crush a bead with a Nasmyth hammer.

It was on Saturday March 31st, 1877, that the Criterion Theatre was first opened by Mr. Alexander Henderson, the play being the piquant and amusing adaptation of MM.

Hennequin and Delacour's "Les Dominos Roses," by James Albery, called *The Pink Dominos*, in which Mr. Wyndham made an instant and remarkable success as Charles Greythorne, the light-hearted young Manchester man who goes to Cremorne with such dire results.

On February 8th, 1879, Mr. Wyndham, under whose management the theatre now was, produced Bronson Howard's *Truth*, in which he played the leading rôle with success; and on August 6th of the same year Mr. Burnand's adaptation from MM. Hennequin and De Najac's "Bébé," called *Betsy*, in which Mr. Wyndham did not act.

On January 18th, 1880, Mr. Wyndham reappeared as Bob Sackett at the Olympic; and on November 20th he created the part of Sir Garroway Fawne in *Where's the Cat?* at the Criterion, an adaptation from the German, by James Albery, in which the suggestiveness of the piece was rather marked, although the performance, as a whole, was very amusing, and Mr. Wyndham's part excellently rendered, despite a superfluity of strong language.

Mr. Wyndham's Montague Leyton in *Butterfly Fever*, a re-adaptation of Sardou's "La Papillonne," by Mr. James Mortimer, produced at the Criterion on May 17th, 1881, was a pleasanter impersonation in every respect, and he was seen to immense advantage in it. Although, again, the play was full of doubtful situations, the art of the actor in skating lightly over thin ice stood him in good stead, and his bright, vivid, touch-and-go style permitted the audience to accept what in other hands might have proved scarcely palatable fare. In December of the same year Mr. Wyndham appeared as Frederick Foggerty in *Foggerty's Fairy*, a piece originally written by Mr. W. S. Gilbert for E. A. Sothorn, but which proved somewhat too involved for the public to appreciate; and subsequently, in March 1882, as Mr. Peregrine Porter in *Fourteen Days*. In February of 1883 the Criterion Theatre was closed, and Mr. Wyndham left England for the United States, appearing there with unqualified success, and returning to London for a short time, but not to act.

Whilst in the Park one day about this time

the Prince of Wales, whose love of genuine comedy is commensurate with his well-known urbanity, met the comedian, who also chanced to be driving there. His Royal Highness pulled up, and, in a few cordially expressed words, inquired of Mr. Wyndham as to the condition of affairs generally in the States; and with the genial remark, "I'd like to see America again"—a wish that has not been gratified, by the way—bade the actor good-day, and bowled off.

As an instance of Mr. Wyndham's ready wit, it may be mentioned that it happened on one occasion that a few friends at the Savage Club were extracting, by a process peculiar to themselves, some capital fun out of Arthur Matthison's "green" coat. Mr. H. S. Leigh put the query, "Where did you get that coat?" Howard Paul was struck by its colour. "What shade of green do you call it?" "Pea, bottle, dragon, scum-on-a-puddle, faded grass," suggested first one and then another "Savage," until Mr. Charles Wyndham, who had been standing a little in the background—evidently, however, enjoying the situation to

the full—remarked drily, “Gentlemen, it’s a bothering shade, and you’re all wrong. I’ve just hit it. It’s *gan-grene*.”

On returning to the States in September Mr. Wyndham produced *The Great Divorce Case*, at the Union Square Theatre, New York, with great success, infusing into the character of the mother-in-law-worried Geoffrey Gordon a vast amount of humour of his own brisk and dashing style. Mr. Howard Paul aptly “christened” him “The Electric Light Comedian.”

On April 16th of the following year (1884) we find Mr. Wyndham at home again at the Criterion, in the part of Bob Sackett. In May there was a revival of *Fourteen Days*, and on the 2nd of the ensuing June, *The Great Divorce Case* succeeded it. On the opening night an opportunity occurred for Mr. Wyndham to display that presence of mind with which his intimates are fairly familiar. During the progress of the piece a blazing gas-batten fell on to the stage. Geoffrey Gordon unconcernedly went on with his lines; then the curtain was lowered—only, however, to be raised again

a few moments afterwards ; and, with the business-like remark, "Now, then, we will resume," Mr. Wyndham dismissed the incident from his mind, and nothing further of a fiery nature intervened to excite the alarm of the audience, who, to all appearance, speedily forgot their momentary anxiety in following the diverting performance of their favourite actor.

Mr. Wyndham's irresistible vivacity succeeded in making *The Candidate*, an adaptation by Mr. Justin Huntly McCarthy of Bisson's "Le Député de Bom-bignac," produced at the Criterion Theatre on



MR. C. WYNDHAM AS
LORD OLDACRE.

November 22nd, 1884, a success, in spite of a threadbare thinness of plot and a plentiful lack of probability. There was a considerable

sprinkling of smart, topical dialogue in the piece, and one good scene; but a certain degree of probability is demanded even in the wildest of farces, and that probability was too often missing in *The Candidate*, as, for instance, in the representation of Lord Oldacre, the head of a bigoted old Tory family, employing as his private secretary, on starvation wages, an old college chum of violently Radical principles, and succeeding in palming this secretary off as himself on the electors of a neighbouring town, to whom, surely, the identity of an important county man like Lord Oldacre must have been perfectly familiar. Viscount Oldacre was a part of the stereotyped Wyndham pattern, and was played by that admirable actor in his own airy, touch-and-go fashion. Mr. Wyndham made all that could be made of the *rôle*, and the impersonation was clever, although lacking in individuality, and being really but one more projection of the clever actor's own personality. On December 12th, 1885, *The Candidate* reached its two hundred and eightieth representation.

Mr. Wyndham, with characteristic frankness,

told his audience, upon the occasion of the revival of O’Keefe’s celebrated comedy, *Wild Oats*, at the Criterion, on May 29th, 1886, that the revival was undertaken by him more from personal predilection than as a matter of business, and he certainly appeared to revel in the rôle of the handsome, careless, generous adventurer, Jack Rover. The comedian’s unwearying energy and unbounded exuberance of animal spirits carried the audience with him throughout the piece. His spontaneous gaiety seemed to be infectious, and to influence his fellow-actors as well as his audience; and Jack Rover proved quite one of the best things that even Mr. Wyndham had ever done.

After the run of *Wild Oats* Mr. Wyndham revived *David Garrick*, on November 1st, 1886, with complete success, himself undertaking the title rôle, and bringing out to the last degree all the tenderness, manliness, and self-sacrificing devotion of the part, as well as its pure comedy. The impersonation is one of Mr. Wyndham’s finest, and it was not surprising that the piece ran with unbroken success until August 10th, 1888, when it had to be

relinquished for a time in order that Mr. Wyndham might fulfil a round of provincial engagements; but upon his return to the Criterion, on November 13th, it was again revived with renewed success.

On January 19th, 1889, Mr. Wyndham appeared as John Mildmay in *Still Waters Run Deep*. In *David Garrick* we saw Mr. Wyndham take a partial departure from that line of bright and sparkling comedy with which he had hitherto associated himself; in Tom Taylor's somewhat antiquated and withal sombre conception a leap was entirely taken from gay to grave. Throughout the impersonation the actor was intense in his sincerity. The ring of true pathos, as well as true humour, was in his acting from first to last; and it was shown beyond all fear of dispute that, peerless as he stood as an exponent of light comedy, he was far too good an actor to be altogether given up to the worshippers of mere merriment—or to those who are only devotees of French farce. In asserting the rightful authority of a husband, and maintaining the sanctity of his home against the cunning of an unscrupulous adven-

turer, Mr. Wyndham displayed such a concentration of energy, such a power of purpose, that when the scene was reached in which the despicable Hawksley has the mask of duplicity torn from his face, and stands revealed in all the horror of his true character, a sort of tremor seemed to pervade the entire house. The rôle of the impassive John Mildmay, favourite as it had been with leading actors since its initial embodiment in 1855, had never perhaps previously been impersonated with such intensity of feeling. For this and other reasons the Criterion revival of *Still Waters Run Deep* was one of the most interesting events in the annals of the contemporary stage.

After a further revival of *David Garrick* on July 10th, Mr. Wyndham created, on the 27th of that month, the part of Sam Hedley in Mr. Burnand's comedy, *The Headless Man*, his bright and dashing style surmounting all obstacles, and making the impersonation a success.

Upon his return from a very successful tour in the States, Mr. Wyndham, true to his old love, revived *David Garrick* on March 22nd,

1890, and again had the satisfaction of finding its powers of attraction unimpaired.

On August 7th, 1890, Mr. Wyndham appeared in his favourite part of Rover in *Wild Oats*, prior to sailing again for America, and the piece was received enthusiastically by a crowded house.

Since that time Mr. Wyndham has re-appeared in various of his well-known characters, and as a most admirable Dazzle, in a revival of *London Assurance*.

Off the boards Mr. Wyndham retains nothing of the characteristic features of his stage impersonations. In his pretty home in St. John's Wood Park he is a cordial but quiet host, and the Manor House is rich in artistic and professional souvenirs of his stage life, travels, and adventures in various parts of the world.

No sooner is the hall door passed than the refinement to be expected in the home of a man of artistic feeling is at once perceptible. Warm, rich colour streaming from stained-glass windows, and gleaming softly from dark oak panelling, makes a fitting atmosphere for

such art-work as Mr. Burgoyne's spirited statuette of David Garrick in his assumed roustering moments, calling out, "For wine inspires us with courage, love, and joy;" a bronze Venus of Milo, and an exquisite veiled child in marble. And in other parts of the well-appointed house personal souvenirs and works of art are innumerable.

In one place may be noticed spoils of Mr. Wyndham's Russian visit, in the shape of a picture on a panel of all the saints in the Greek Calendar—a souvenir of St. Petersburg, and a silver model of a troika on a base of malachite, which serves to remind its possessor of a sojourn in Moscow.

In the cosy study, where Mr. Wyndham transacts an infinity of business, is to be seen suspended over the mantelpiece the sword which the actor wore as brigade surgeon of the 19th Army Corps through the Seven Days and Red River campaigns in the American Civil War; and on the wall, among other interesting items, are the "Ten o'clock, Sandringham time," programme of the performance given before the Prince and Princess of Wales

in 1887, and a peculiarly interesting letter written by E. A. Sothorn to T. W. Robertson about *David Garrick*, in which the actor gives a glimpse of his first-night feelings as well as his opinion of the part. He says, "The lines go off like rockets, and are dead certainties. The more I get of that class the more brilliantly my part goes. I am an awfully bad long-speech actor; but give me good lines, rapid asides, and I give the author the full benefit of every word. I don't mean on the first night, for on that occasion my value is about thirty shillings a week. I must know I've got the audience."

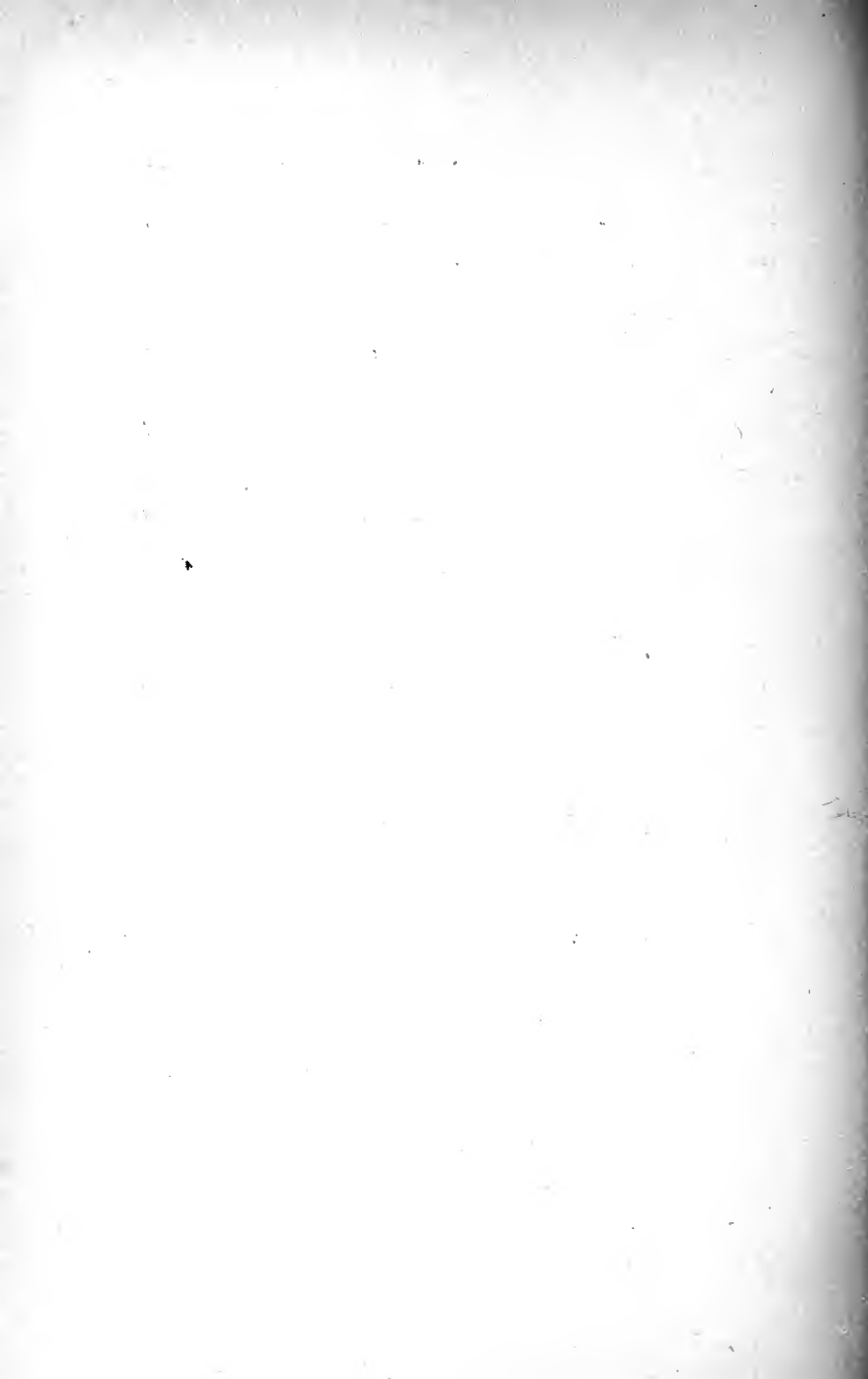
Some curious Russian playbills, in Russian, and therefore "to the general" perfectly hieroglyphical characters, are also on the walls, with crowns of bay, coloured ribbons, pictures of saints, and other souvenirs of the North.

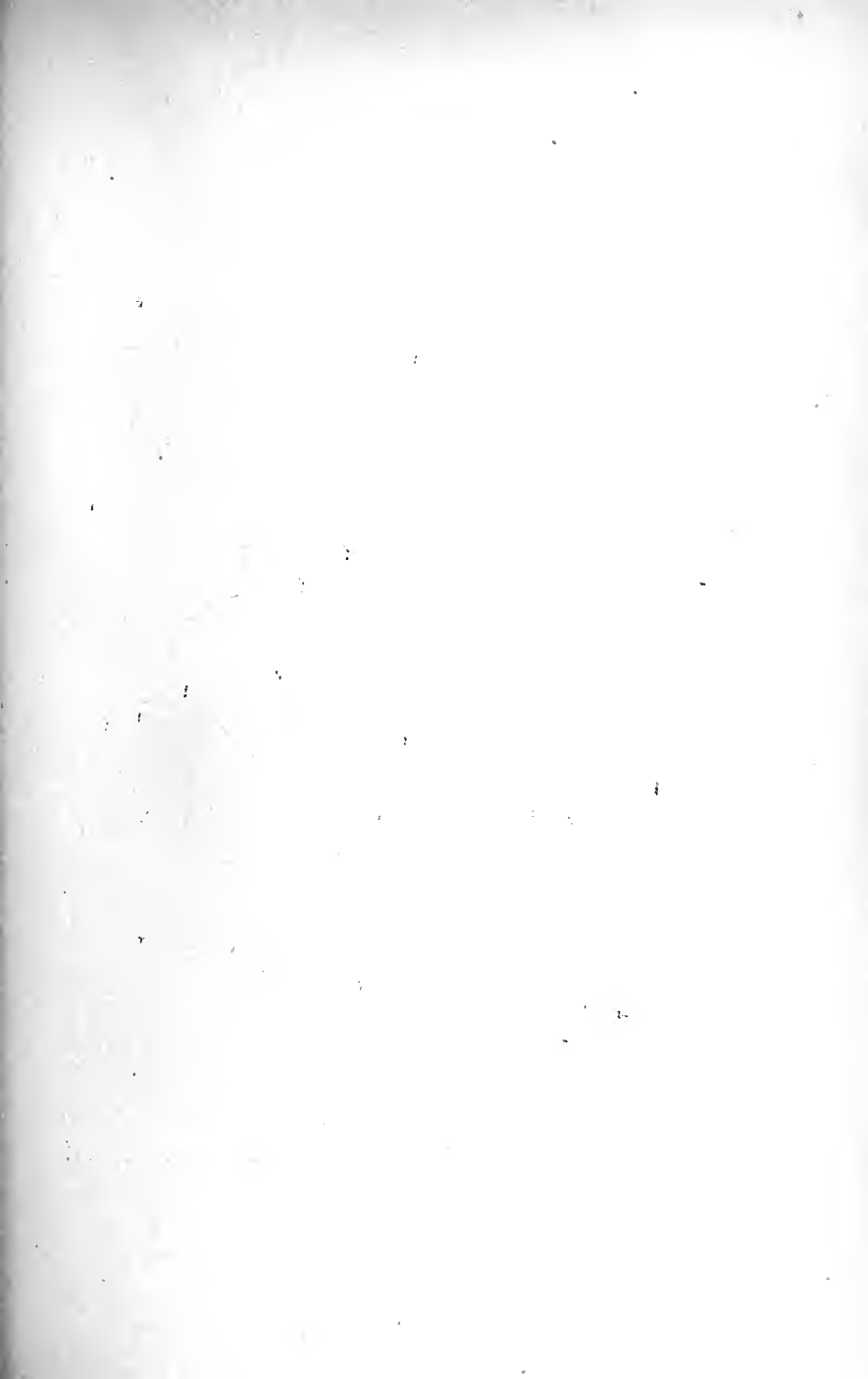
Another of Mr. Wyndham's highly-valued trophies is a handsome vase and laurel wreath, which remind him of the unique success which he achieved during his appearance in Berlin, the vase, which is of bronze and silver, bearing the inscription, "Charles Wyndham, von

Direktor Lautenburg, Residenz Theater, Berlin, December, 1887."

Mr. Wyndham characteristically calls his study "the room of the past," as its contents virtually tell the story of his life.

Here, in this pleasant home, the popular actor leads a thoroughly domestic life with his wife and daughter, and devotes much time to correspondence with his son, who is the owner of a mountain ranche in Colorado ; and here he delights to gather around him from time to time the professional and personal friends of a life-time, and to forget for a while the cares and responsibilities of actor-managerial life in the comfort and luxury of a well-ordered and artistic home.







MR. EDWARD TERRY. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY GUNN & STUART, RICHMOND.

Sincerely yours
Edward Terry

EDWARD TERRY.

OF all the actors of the present day few, if any, have more persistently and pitilessly afflicted playgoers with "the pleasant spasms we call laughter" than that excellent citizen and comedian Edward O'Connor Terry. Whether Mr. Terry holds with philosophic Hobbes, that "the passion of laughter is nothing else but sudden glory, arising from a sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmity of others," or whether he agrees with Emerson, that the essence of all comedy is "an honest or well-intended halfness," is a moot

point. The all-important consideration for playgoers is, that he knows well how to excite their risibility, and that not only by sheer incongruity, *grotesquerie*, or surprise, but by that finer art which recognises and acts upon the truth that the springs of laughter and of tears lie side by side in human nature, and should be within the range of an actor of genuine power, let him belong to whatever school he may.

Mr. Terry, however, has made his reputation chiefly by an exuberant humour, a *bizarrierie* of style, a grotesqueness of make-up, a daring extravagance of fancy, and, withal, a dry, quaint, sententious sort of fantastic philosophy underlying even his most farcical impersonations. Sometimes his humour has undoubtedly been of the Hobbes complexion. He has held up before the audience so ludicrous a specimen of humanity, some creature made up of such odd whims and weaknesses, that their laughter has arisen from some sudden conception of superiority in themselves. At other times there has been a dry humour which has set the wit at work, and won a more discriminating tribute. Or, as in the *rôle* of Richard Phenyl, in *Sweet*

Lavender, actor and author have created a character with more humour and pathos blent in it than have been known since Dickens died.

If there were not a great deal of human nature in Mr. Terry's stage figures he would never have achieved a reputation such as he now enjoys, but his humanity is a humanity "after its kind." He holds a mirror up to nature, but it is a mirror such as one happens upon now and then outside the premises of a cheap restaurant, in which features are broadened or lengthened into a distortion—a caricature which is amusing, as it shows human nature as it might be under exceptional conditions. The likeness is not absolutely lost, but it is sufficiently merged in broad caricature, that the subject of such cavalier treatment can afford to be amused at it, and to enjoy a laugh at his own expense. So is it with some of the impersonations of Mr. Terry. They are so funny, so obviously exaggerated for the specific purpose of tickling the imagination, so honestly outside the pale of ordinary experience, and yet so instinct with a perception of the foibles and

fancies of human nature, that we laugh *with* them as well as *at* them, and jubilantly recognise in them a clever study of the ridiculous side of—our neighbours.

Mr. Terry, whose private virtues are as undeniable as his professional peculiarities, is quite a parochial bigwig at Barnes, where he has a charming house full of pretty and interesting things, and shines in a domestic capacity with as much lustre as on the stage; and he is one more proof in the flesh of the fact that the modern actor of the best type is as far removed from the "rogue and vagabond" of the discourteous Statute Book as the stage of to-day is from the remote and objectionable theatre of the Restoration.

Mr. Terry's home life at Priory Lodge is just that of any other prosperous professional man of domestic as well as artistic tastes. Four or five acres of delightful gardens, a tennis court, an orchard, a tiny poultry farm, hot-house, long tall walls famous for their peach trees, and a quaintly picturesque old smoking den, hidden away in a quiet shrubbery and panelled with curious old Dutch tiles,—are

some of the attractions outside the house ; and within its pleasant walls there is the same air of home, made a little piquant and fascinating by the host of interesting relics of the stage and spoils of travel—for Mr. Terry is quite a globe-trotter in a modest way—gathered together during years of energetic life.

Souvenirs of the stage and of other lands divide the honours of the house in which Mr. Terry loves to pass with his wife and son and daughter the too-few hours which the claims of his professional, parochial, and masonic duties permit him to call his own ; and cases of books chiefly connected with the stage are found cheek by jowl with portraits of great players of the past and present, strange weapons and curiosities collected by the actor during his wanderings through Western Europe, Lapland, Poland, Russia, and the Norwegian Fjords, and a prominent position is given to a bill of the play of a benefit performance at the Theatre Royal, Belfast, for Gustavus V. Brooke, the brave actor who went down in the *London* after doing his utmost to rescue the women and children on board the ill-fated ship.

Mr. Terry's name figures in the bill as The Lord Mayor of London in *Richard III*.

Mr. Terry has held various important offices in Freemasonry, including that of Grand Treasurer of Grand Lodge; he has given an address before a Church Congress on "Popular Amusements in Relation to Christian Life," and was one of the few representative players of the period honoured with an invitation to the Jubilee Thanksgiving Service in Westminster Abbey in 1887. He has made many friends, and his pretty home is in its way and its degree as much a centre and source of wholesome gaiety and genuine happiness as his theatre is to the playgoing public. Mr. Terry was the founder of the Strand Theatre Provident and Benevolent Fund, which is still vigorously alive and prosperous, and out of it sprang the Lyceum Benevolent Fund and the Actors' Benevolent Fund. He is also a Trustee of the Dramatic Sick Fund, and originated the idea of local theatrical charity centres in connection with the Actors' Benevolent Fund. In his private capacity Mr. Terry is a Trustee of the Barnes Charity, a member of

the Board of Guardians of twelve years' standing, and an active member of the Committee of the Local Recreation Classes and Workingmen's Institute; and in his day he has done good service as a member of the School Board.

It is the cleanly, wholesome quality in Mr. Terry's humour that has done much towards making him so universally popular. His wit is pure and kindly. The salacious *double entendre* on the one hand, and the acrid pessimism which is too much the note of to-day on the other, are entirely alien to his humour. His impersonations hurt no one's feelings, trample upon no one's prejudices, sneer at no one's inferior wit. His fantastic imaginings compel a welcome from all who have a sense of humour, and in his most vivacious moments his wit, though it may take the erratic form of forked lightning, is really as harmless as the bright, soft light which brightens the summer sky, and adds cheer and not danger to a dark hour.

There is a perceptible atmosphere of Cockayne about Mr. Terry's acting—a sharpness of perception, a readiness of resource, a fertility of

invention which sometimes lead him to speak words other than those "set down" for him in the prompt-book; and as a matter of fact he was born in London on March 10th, 1844, and grew up with ample opportunities of studying mankind in every variety of character and physique. In 1863 he made one of his earliest appearances upon any stage as Wormwood in *The Lottery Ticket*, at the Mechanics' Institute, Christchurch, Hants, and as Myles Na Coppaleen—in connection with which his experiences were peculiar.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Terry's first appearance was in the play *Eily O'Connor*, announced as *The Colleen Bawn*, in the Mechanics' Institute, Christchurch. The company, including the band, comprised four gentlemen, three ladies, and a boy, who was announced in the bills as "*La Petite Napoléon*"! and sang "The Cure." The heading of the bills announced that Madame ——'s Dramatic Company, taking advantage of the closing of the Theatres Royal Drury Lane, Covent Garden, Her Majesty's, etc., would appear at Christchurch for six nights only. The company being so small, the

characters of Father Tom, Sheelan, and Moore were omitted. Mr. Terry played Myles, and the first instruction he received from his manager, who played Danny Mann, was to "gag" to some imaginary villagers. The stage was a flimsy structure of planks on trestles; the cave scene, which was reckoned to produce a great effect, was worthy of Vincent Crummies himself; a table and chair were placed right and left to represent rocks, and a plank was removed from the centre for Myles to dive through. There being no ground rows he had to walk through the water, mount his chair rock, and after talking about going up into his distillery get down again. Danny Mann, habited in a colonel's undress frock-coat, came with Eily on to the opposite rock, the table, and on her refusal of the marriage lines, he thrust her between the gauze waters and the narrow opening in the planks. Myles then attempted to fire his gun; it missed, but Danny fell, shouting, "I'm shot! I'm shot!" Myles then discovered Eily, pulled off his hat—his wig coming off with it in his excitement—and dived head first on to the floor of the hall,

nearly breaking his neck, but pulling Eily out, and standing up in the gauze waters shouting, "Saved!" upon which scene the curtain fell to tumultuous applause. At the close of the evening's performance the manager called Mr. Terry, cordially congratulated him upon his successful performance, and recognised his ability in a practical fashion by presenting him with the sum of eighteenpence!

Then followed a provincial preliminary professional canter extending over four years, at the end of which period the young actor came to London, and made his first bow in the metropolis to a transpontine audience at the Surrey Theatre in September 1867, when he appeared as Finnikin Fussleton in *A Cure for the Fidgets*, and possibly struck the keynote which was to dominate the whole of his stage career, as he is one of the most incessantly energetic actors on the boards, never weary of filling in his part with elaborate "business," of a kind, be it added, which increases the value and humour of the character.

Later in the same year Mr. Terry migrated to the Lyceum, appearing as the First Grave-

digger in *Hamlet* ; but it was not until August 1869 that he secured his first opportunity of really showing of what stuff he was made in the amusing rôle of the King of Toledo in Byron's burlesque, *The Pilgrim of Love*. By his whimsical and extravagantly grotesque reading of the part it was evident that in the new-comer the public were to find an eccentric comedian and burlesque actor of singular quaintness and originality ; and during the eight years with which he was associated with the Strand Theatre Mr. Terry created character after character, each funnier than its forbear. The extreme attenuation of his figure, his facial make-up—generally conveying the idea of hopeless melancholy—his excellent and fantastic dancing,—all marked him out as that *rara avis* in the theatrical firmament a comedian of varied and original powers ; and his creations of Kalyba in Mr. Burnand's burlesque, *Sir George and a Dragon* ; Polyphloisboio in his *Orion* ; Calino in Mr. Farnie's *Nemesis* ; and the Widow Sheppard in the same author's *Little Jack Sheppard* ; as well as Cassidy in Byron's comedy, *Old Soldiers* ; Joe Sally in Reece's

Dolly's Delusion; and Captain Ginger in Byron's comedy, *Weak Woman*,—paved the way to a still greater popularity to be won during a long engagement at the Gaiety.

Mr. Terry's "Gaiety" engagement lasted until 1884, and was only terminated by his assuming the management of a theatre of his own within a stone's-throw of the scene of his many successes. Among other notable impersonations upon the Gaiety stage Mr. Terry created the parts of the King of Spain in Byron's *Little Don Cæsar de Bazan*; Devilshoof in *The Bohemian Girl*; Mephistopheles in *Little Doctor Faust*, a most comical and, in its way, remarkable performance, introducing a "showman's song," which was irresistibly humorous; and on September 2nd, 1878, he appeared as Jeames in Mr. Burnand's comedy of that name, founded upon Thackeray's "Jeames's Diary."

On February 1st, 1879, Mr. Terry appeared in Mr. Byron's farce, *Uncle*, and on April 2nd in the same author's burlesque, *Notre Dame de Paris, Pretty Esmeralda, and Captain Phœbus of Ours*; on April 30th he appeared as Grégoire

in *Boulogne*, Mr. Burnand's version of MM. Hennequin and Millaud's *Niniche*, and on November 11th was extremely comical in another burlesque by the same author, *Robbing Roy; or, Scotched and Kilt*, in which he appeared as Rob Roy Macgregor.

When Mr. Burnand's comedy, *Unlimited Cash*, was produced on October 27th, Mr. Terry created the part of Robert Smuggins, after previously appearing as Ruy Gomez de Silva in Byron's extravaganza, *Hernani; or, The Fatal Whistle*, on August 30th, and on September 27th as Casimir in *The Great Casimir*, the libretto of which was adapted by Henry S. Leigh from the French of MM. De Prevel and Saint-Albin.

The following year saw Mr. Terry appear as Don Ferolo Whiskerandos in a revival of *The Critic* at St. James's Hall on February 1st, in which his passion for Tilburina and his duel with the Beefeater were irresistibly funny in their utter but apparently unconscious extravagance; as the Count di Luna in Byron's *Trovatore; or, Larks with a Libretto*, produced at the Olympic on April 26th; and as Ali

Baba, in which he was delightfully droll and agile, in Reece's burlesque, *The Forty Thieves*, produced at the Gaiety on Christmas Eve.

During the greater part of 1881 Mr. Terry toured in the provinces with great success, appearing, among other things, as Albemarle Tozer in Byron's *New Brooms*, at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin, on July 18th; and on December 24th reappeared at the Gaiety as Abanazar in Robert Reece's *Aladdin*, and was a droll and amusing figure, and the life of the burlesque.

Other Gaiety successes were Mr. Terry's wonderfully funny impersonation of Petitpois in Mr. Burnand's *Bluebeard; or, The Hazard of the Dye*, produced at the Gaiety on March 12th, 1883, in which his imitation of the Civic Toast-master was perfect in its unexaggerated caricature; and on December 10th he made a remarkably amusing figure of the Chevalier Walkinshaw in Mr. Pinero's comedy, *The Rocket*.

In the following year the actor appeared as Djin Danhasch in Mr. Burnand's *Camaralzaman* at the Gaiety, on January 26th, and then, after a long spell in the provinces Mr. Terry

reappeared in London at the Olympic on December 16th, 1886, as Daniel Chuffy in an adaptation of a German farce, called *The Churchwarden*, with which he opened his own theatre on Monday, October 17th, 1887, and in which he impersonated the fussy, fidgety, muddled parochial personage to the life. On March 21st, 1887, Mr. Terry appeared successfully as John Perryble in *My Cousin*, by Mr. James J. Hewson, and infused some life into a rather tedious piece; and on December 7th he impersonated Bottom and Pyramus at Miss Kate Phillips' benefit at the Haymarket, keeping his humour within due bounds.

Amusing as ever, Mr. Terry contrived to keep his audience in good humour as Mr. Samuel Bundy in *The Woman Hater*, a farce by Mr. David Lloyd, produced at Terry's, December 1st; and in one mad-house scene the actor was peculiarly good, and revelled in the extravagant humour which was justified by the circumstances of the piece.

On February 11th, 1888, Mr. Terry appeared in a curious, fanciful, and pretty little piece, called *Darby and Joan*, by Mr. H. F. Bellingham and

Mr. W. Best, in which he acted the dual rôles of a peppery, shrewd, but good-hearted old admiral, and the same personage as a youthful and romantic lover. Naturally the eccentricities of the admiral were more completely within the actor's range than the part of the lover, but in both rôles Mr. Terry was good, and his versatility was conspicuously proved by the rapid transition from a strongly-marked character to one absolutely opposed to it in make-up, diction, and sentiment.

But the success of Mr. Terry's new theatre was yet to come, and it was found in a charming domestic comedy by Mr. Pinero, in which kindly humour predominated to an unusual degree, and the Pinerian spring of cynicism was scarcely noticeable.

As Richard Phenyl, Esq., of the Inner Temple, in Mr. Pinero's charming domestic comedy, *Sweet Lavender*, produced for the first time at Terry's Theatre on March 21st, 1888, Mr. Terry was fitted with a part admirably calculated to show his quaint humour off to advantage. Poor Dick Phenyl is a barrister, briefless, bankrupt in purse and reputation, a slave to

the whisky bottle, yet with it all so frank, so tender-hearted, so unselfish, so witty, so whimsical, that he is absolutely irresistible, and we love him while we laugh at him, as we love Dick Swiveller and Newman Noggs. One thinks of "bright, broken Maginn" as one follows the eccentric vagaries of this poor waif of the law, who is so pathetically conscious of his own weakness, so humorous in excusing his frequent lapses, and in whose case the surface, sparkling with whimsical wit, only hides a depth of self-contempt which is almost tragic. Poor Dick Phenyl! One laughs at him, but one loves him well. There is a touch of genius about him which redeems much, and a manly power of self-sacrifice which would cover more. One forgets his failings in the quaint charm of his whimsicality, and forgives them for the sake of the noble qualities hidden away under his comical exterior.

Mr. Terry's Richard Phenyl, Esq., is a figure which lingers lovingly in the memory as one of his cleverest creations. To see this dear old hard-up, briefless one, tossing with "Clemmy, my boy," for the one arm-chair; to hear him

talk of "our aunt," and assure his young friend that Lavender "loves us," and that "the prospect of an alliance with us might set up cerebral irritation in any young woman;" to laugh at his quaint antics; to



MR. E. TERRY AS DICK PHENYL.

find one's eyes fill with regret at his many lapses, and one's heart expanding in the contemplation of his grand unselfishness—all this is delightful, refreshing, wholesome. *Sweet Lavender* is written in Mr. Pinero's

brightest vein, but with a simpler note of pathos than usual. It is a rainbow drama, an April day of smiles and tears from end to end, and Mr. Terry makes of the central figure a creation as quaint and lovable as anything since the days of Dickens.

On October 2nd, 1889, Mr. Terry created a curious and gratifying precedent, and forged a new and bright link between the Stage and the Church, by reading a paper on Popular Amusements before the Church Congress at Cardiff. The comedian championed his profession with eloquence and zeal, pointing out, amongst other things, that the Church in years past accepted the aid of the theatre, *teste* the miracle plays, and a drama by one Ezekiel, who was called the tragic poet of the Jews, which is said to have been written shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, the subject being taken from "Exodus, or the Departure of the Israelites," and its object to animate his scattered people with a hope of future deliverance from captivity. Mr. Terry also instanced Greek tragedy as a species of solemn feast and religious ceremony; quoted the play written by a pupil of Thespis, which was so sad, and had such an effect upon the audience that a repetition of it was forbidden; and referred to the Passion Play at Ober-Ammergau to-day, the reverence exhibited by the actors, and the emotion, and sympathy, and veneration of the

audience. The actor, having made his point then eulogised the stage as a necessity of the times and a place where the public may learn to practise virtue and avoid vice, and referred to the "sermons in Shakespeare's plays" with eloquence and truth. Mr. Terry's idea of the stage and its functions proved elevated and worthy, and perfectly acceptable to the audience. He insisted upon the golden rule of *Virtue Triumphant—Villainy Defeated*, and referred to the good work done amongst the poor by wholesome melodrama, saying that he had seen rough men and women and children weeping in an East End theatre over the trials and sorrows of a hero and heroine.

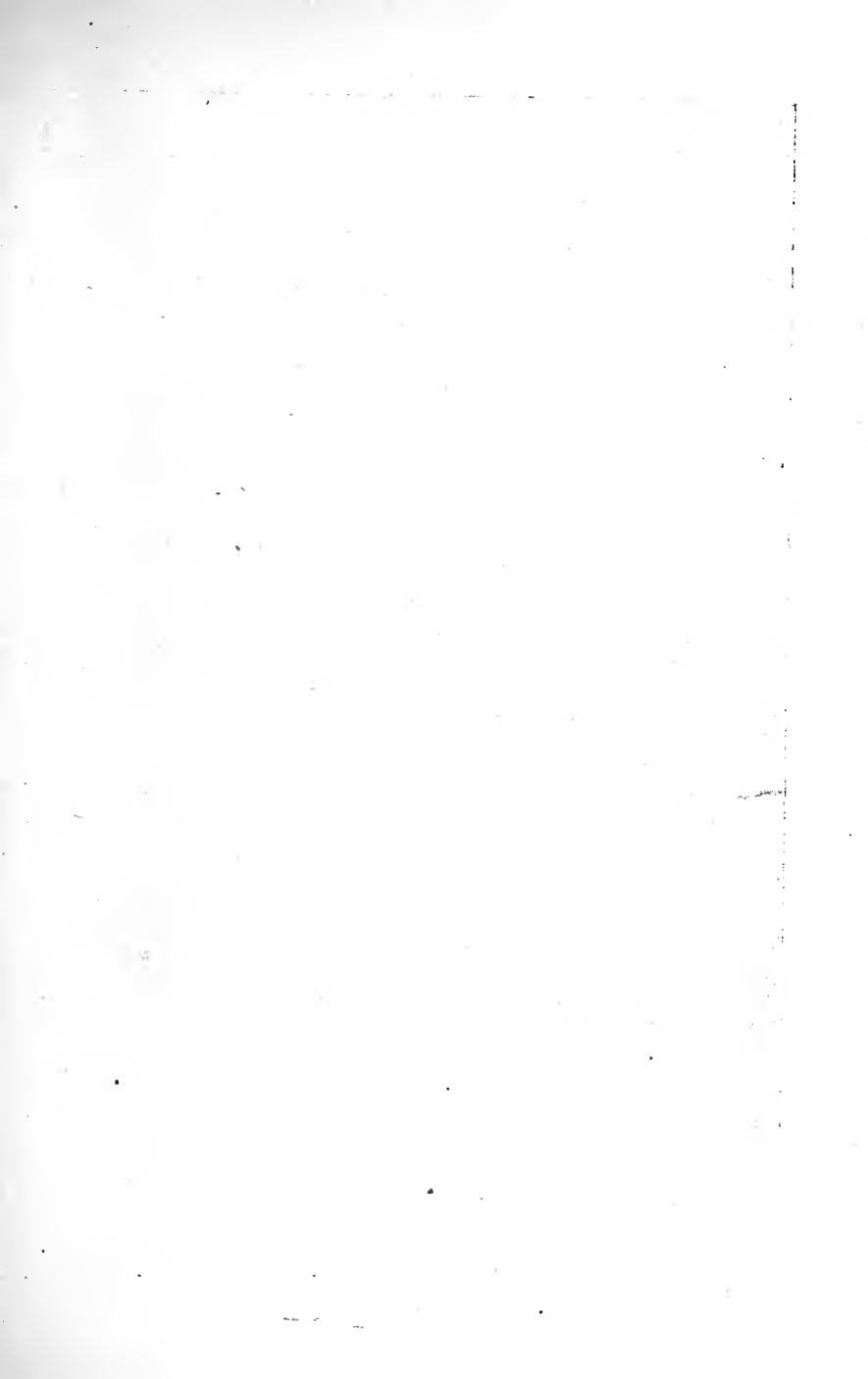
Upon the question of comedy and burlesque Mr. Terry spoke wisely and with knowledge. Referring to occasionally impure plays, mostly of foreign origin, he contended that they afforded an admirable reason why the clergy should not hold aloof from the theatre, but by their presence ensure propriety; and asserted boldly that the Church, before condemning the stage indiscriminately, should visit the fifty or so theatres in London, and judge for them-

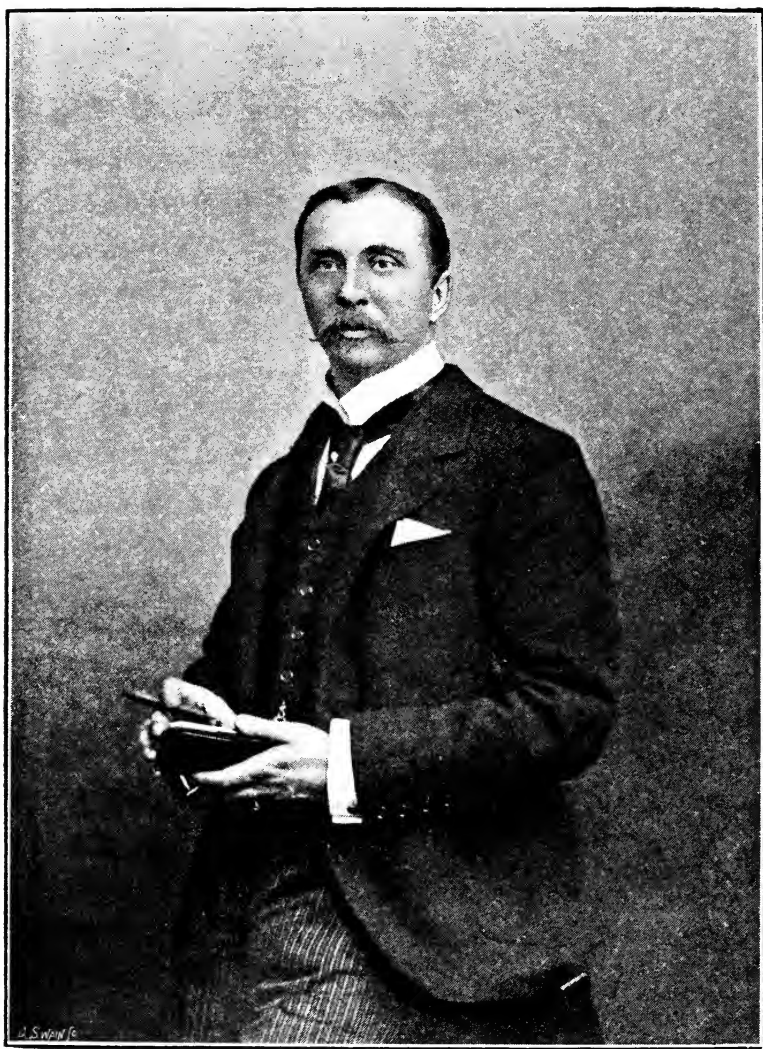
selves, and that, as the stage is the amusement for the people, it is with the people that the question whether it is pure or degraded entirely rests.

On March 19th, 1889, Mr. Terry appeared successfully as Sir Joseph Trent, in Mr. G. W. Pigott's play, *The Bookmaker*.

In Mr. Pinero's clever and comical play, *In Chancery*—revived at Terry's Theatre on November 22nd, 1890, after having been originally produced with only moderate success,—the principal rôle is a most amusing creation, in which Mr. Terry is permitted by the conditions of the part to indulge his whimsical and extravagantly grotesque view of farcical comedy to the fullest extent. Montague Joliffe, the commercial traveller who has lost his memory in a railway collision, and who does not know who he is, what he is, where he came from, whether he is married or single—to whom, in short, the past is a blank, and who eventually finds himself the possessor, as he believes, of two wives, and on the point of marrying a third—is one of the most laughter-compelling figures of the stage of to-day; and Mr. Terry's

rendering of the comic despair of the bewildered man, aided by his extremely amusing make-up, is simply irresistible. Yet upon its original production it was by no means conspicuously successful, although with this revival it took the taste of the town at once, and more than compensated Mr. Terry for its originally cool reception by achieving a long and completely successful run.





FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD.

H. A. Kuddal

W. H. KENDAL.

THIRTY years ago the *enten'e cordiale* which happily now exists between society and the stage was in a somewhat tepid condition, amounting to little more than a bowing acquaintance. The antiquated prejudice which had led the "eminently respectable" classes to regard the actor with, at the best, a kind of patronising and pitying tolerance, and his profession as quite outside the pale of serious avocations, still flourished. Even genius itself could not always make headway against the stupid, narrow-minded notions of actors as inevitably and innately tinged with that element of vagabondage which inspired the wording of the Act dealing with them in their more nomadic days.

Mr. Sampson Brass insisted, with right on his side, that he was "a gentleman by Act of Parliament." For a lamentably long period

it seemed as though equally, "by Act of Parliament," actors were to be regarded as "rogues and vagabonds." But in the fulness of time all this was to be changed, and if the adoption of the actor's calling did not positively involve recognition as a "gentleman" by right of the profession, it was at least admitted that a gentleman and an actor were not necessarily antagonistic terms.

That this healthier feeling has gained so much ground during the last three decades is due in no inconsiderable degree to Mr. Kendal and other actors equally determined to respect themselves and their calling; and whether or no the throwing open of the doors of houses at one time exclusive to a degree is beneficial to art, it cannot be prejudicial to the general influence of the stage, as social recognition, developing latterly into absolute hero worship, induces numbers of people to visit the theatre who would under other conditions have ignored its existence, so that

Those go now who never went before,
And those who always went now go the more."

From the moment of his first appearance in 1861 on the stage of the Soho Theatre, now known as the Royalty, Mr. Kendal has moved in an atmosphere of intense respectability, and by unvarying devotion to his profession has convinced the public that art is not incompatible with clean linen or a clean life.

Perhaps an additional element in the steady building-up of Mr. Kendal's reputation and popularity is that he cannot be accused of possessing genius. He has an admirable talent, carefully cultured; he is essentially a "safe" actor, sure to be letter-perfect on the first night; his "business" is always intelligent if rarely inspired; in appearance, manner, method, he is essentially agreeable, and if we miss the brilliant, erratic fire of genius, we can at least enjoy the genial play of quiet, well-bred humour, and an intelligent realisation of an author's ideal.

Mr. Kendal is the outward and visible sign of that social reform, if the dubious phrase may be used in the connection, which has spread to the stage with good results. It is

almost impossible even to think of him dissociated from his accomplished wife, and it is not easy to picture the drawing-room in which Mr. and Mrs. Kendal would not be welcome guests, while their own house in Harley Street is not only a model, but an essentially typical English *ménage*.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, or as they are known to their personal friends, Mr. and Mrs. Grimston, are a thoroughly domesticated couple, devoted to their children and their home, and spending their scanty leisure in hospitality and artistic relaxations, Mr. Kendal painting and drawing with considerable skill—a clever portrait of Salvini as Othello from his brush being a noticeable item in his library. Mr. Kendal is also a great smoker, finding enormous solace in tobacco after his exertions at the theatre, and frequently enjoying the modest luxury until the small hours, when, perhaps, like most actors, he experiences a greater sense of freedom than at any other of the twenty-four, the claims of his profession and society, in which he is *persona grata* taking up nearly every moment of the day.

His artistic taste leads him to surround himself with pictures and all sorts of charming things, but the keynote of the home is solid, restful, thoroughly English comfort. The blighted beauty and greenery-gallery grace of æstheticism is conspicuous by its absence in the Harley Street drawing-room; while in its place the rather Philistine but substantial comfort of brilliant lighting, roomy tables, huge chimney-glasses, and the conventional appointments of a "highly respectable" establishment reign supreme. But for the wealth of theatrical photographs and dramatic *souvenirs* it might be the house of any prosperous professional man, and the home is not altogether out of harmony with the tenant.

No doubt it is this placid, easy-going, well-ordered home life which has contributed largely towards making Mr. Kendal so young a man for his age. Fair, good-looking, blue-eyed, with an open, lineless face, Mr. Kendal might still pass as a man on the sunny side of forty; but the register of births records pitilessly that he was born on December 16th, 1843, and that he should have retained his youthful appearance

so long in the face of much hard work and many responsibilities argues well for the quiet comfort of his life off the stage. A well-bred placidity is the best preservative in the world, and combined with a reasonable amount of success in life is perhaps the nearest approach to millennial peace consonant with the conditions of mundane existence ; and everything about Mr. Kendal and his home speaks with mute eloquence of substantial comfort, a smoothly gliding voyage down the stream of life, and an exemplary regularity that is the wisest and best method of existence for all, if they were but fortunate enough to understand it.

Mr. Kendal is one of the very few living actors who have appeared before the Queen "by command," playing the principal *rôle* in *Uncle's Will* and Harry Spreadbrow in *Sweethearts*, and receiving substantial and enduring, as well as immediate, tokens of Her Majesty's appreciation. To be selected for so much honour might well have turned the head of a greater actor, but it seemed in Mr. Kendal's case nothing more than the fitting outcome of

so quietly and decorously successful a career, and the one thing needful to stamp him once and for ever as a favourite actor with the large class of society to which Royal approval would almost rank as of more importance than the *imprimatur* of Shakespeare or Sheridan.

Characteristically enough, Mr. Kendal has always had the advantage of appearing upon the stage in good company. Even in the four years' engagement, from 1862 until 1866, at the Theatre Royal, Glasgow, he was fortunate enough to act with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Gustavus V. Brooke, the Boucicaults, Mr. Anderson, and Helen Faucit; and upon his return to London he appeared on October 31st, 1866, at the Haymarket Theatre in *A Dangerous Friend*, and made a good impression at once.

Rather less than a year later, on September 2nd, 1867, he got his first real chance as Orlando in *As You Like It*, and even in those early days displayed the care, refinement, and manly, well-bred ease which have been conspicuous in his stage method ever since.

It is interesting, in connection with the initial success of Mr. Kendal, to recall the fact that he

played Orlando to his wife's Rosalind upon the very evening of their wedding day in 1869, at the Theatre Royal, Manchester, as a member of Mr. Buckstone's famous "Haymarket Company." The incident was not only a little romance of the stage, but curiously and pleasantly characteristic of the inseparable attachment of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, both on and off the stage, which has been one of the most charming and pleasant features of their life.

Mr. Kendal's quiet, gentlemanly style of acting was excellently adapted to the Haymarket Theatre, and he remained a popular member of the company for several years, playing such parts as Don Octavio in Cibber's old comedy, *She Wou'd and She Would Not*, Manfred in *Pietra*, Captain Absolute, Charles Surface, and other prominent parts in old comedy revivals, as well as appearing as that very unfavourable specimen of the British working-man, Bob Levitt, in the original production of Mary Warner; in *Uncle's Will*, which Mr. Theyre Smith wrote expressly for Miss Madge Robertson and her future husband; as Prince Philamir



MR. KENDAL AS CLAUDE MELNOTTE.



in Mr. Gilbert's bitterly cynical *Palace of Truth*; Pygmalion in *Fygmalion and Galatea*; Ethais in *The Wicked World*, and Frederic Smailey in Mr. Gilbert's *Charity*.

After a brief engagement in 1875 at the Opéra Comique, during which Mr. and Mrs. Kendal appeared in *The Lady of Lyons*, *As You Like It*, and *She Stoops to Conquer*, a migration was made to the Court Theatre, then under the management of Mr. Hare, where Mr. Kendal appeared on March 12th, 1875, in the comedy, *Lady Flora*, *A Nine Days' Wonder*, *Broken Hear.s*, and *A Scrap of Paper*, subsequently joining the Bancroft company at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, in 1876, as a pleasant Dr. Thornton in *Peril*, and a romantic Charles Courtly in *London Assurance*; and on January 12th, 1878, created the part of Captain Beauclerc in *Diplomacy*, showing a quiet power and intensity of feeling in the great “*scène d:s trois hommes*,” which hitherto had been unsuspected, and which, therefore, made the greater impression, coming upon the audience as an agreeable surprise, and proving that Mr. Kendal only needed the opportunity to show

that he had something more in him than his ordinary rôles demanded.

On January 4th, 1879, Mr. Kendal returned to the Court Theatre, appearing as Colonel Blake in a revival of *A Scrap of Paper*; on February 15th he played Gustave de Grignon in *The Ladies' Battle*; on April 19th he appeared as Frank Maitland in *The Queen's Shilling*; and upon June 14th impersonated Master Walter at the Vandenhoff benefit at the Criterion Theatre; and when the famous Hare and Kendal management of the St. James's was inaugurated, upon the night of October 4th, 1879, Mr. Kendal resumed his rôle of Frank Maitland in *The Queen's Shilling*, and on December 18th created with considerable charm the character of Count Federigo deggli Alberighi in *The Falcon*, singing a graceful little lyric, "Dead Mountain Flowers," with skill, and making the whole figure extremely pleasing and refined, and entirely in harmony with the gentle melancholy which pervades the Laureate's tender little dramatic idyll, based, like Longfellow's charmingly pathetic "Student's Tale" of "The Falcon of Ser Federigo," upon

“A tale of the Decameron, told
 In Palmieri's garden old,
 By Fiametta, laurel-crowned,
 While her companions lay around,
 And heard the intermingled sound
 Of airs that on their errands sped,
 And wild birds gossiping o'erhead,
 And lisp of leaves, and fountain's fall,
 And her own voice more sweet than all.”

In the Harley Street library to this day there is a rather touching relic of this play in the form of a stuffed falcon, the bird which appeared in the title *rôle* of the Laureate's play, originally a fine specimen of the wild or “haggard” falcon, which, after taming down into a general favourite and quite accomplished ornitho-histrion, suddenly died in the height of its dramatic fame, his place being filled for the remainder of the run by Mr. Michell's highly-trained peregrine, Eurydice, the original “creator” of the part.

On March 13th, 1880, Mr. Kendal appeared successfully as John Mildmay in *Still Waters Run Deep*; then came revivals of *The Queen's Shilling* and *The Ladies' Battle*, with the latter of which *A Regular Fix* was given, with Mr. Kendal as Sir Hugh de Brass.

As William, in Mr. W. G. Wills's version of

Douglas Jerrold's famous old play, Mr. Kendal was manly and conscientious as ever; but the part was not altogether suitable to an actor *par excellence* of drawing-room parts, and there was a certain indefinable but very perceptible artificiality about the impersonation which detracted from its merit, and Mr. Kendal was seen to considerably greater advantage as Charles Denis in Mr. Coghlan's comedy, *Good Fortune*, adapted from Octave Feuillet's "Roman d'un Jeune Homme Pauvre," and produced at the St. James's Theatre on December 4th, 1880. The play only ran for a month, but Mr. Kendal spared no pains in making his part a pathetic, dignified, natural impersonation.

In Mr. Pinero's clever comedy, *The Money Spinner*, Mr. Kendal created very cleverly the rôle of Lord Kingussie, a young Scotch nobleman, whose heart is bigger than his brain, and who has a very generous and high-minded sense of the obligations of his position. The impersonation was thoroughly well thought out, and acted with the care and distinction which Mr. Kendal always gives to such parts. Concurrently with this Mr. Kendal played Jasper

Carew in *A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing*, and, later on, the *pièce de résistance* was alternated with *The Lady of Lyons*, with Mr. Kendal as a manly and romantic Claude Melnotte. On May 28th Mr. Kendal created the part of Captain Mainwaring, V.C., in Mr. Godfrey's play, *Coralie*; and on October 27th he appeared as Colonel White in the revival of *Home*, acting with a naturalism and agreeable manner which made the impersonation very acceptable, although it did not afford him any great opportunities.

Mr. Pinero's comedy, *The Squire*, produced on December 29th, 1881, afforded Mr. Kendal an excellent and thoroughly sympathetic part in Lieutenant Thorndyke, a frank, manly fellow, full of good instincts, and with a heart of gold. Mr. Kendal emphasised both the light and shade of the part with admirable effect, and was uniformly excellent alike in the more emotional scenes, and in those which called for nothing more than quiet, firm, unaffected manliness.

The production of Mr. B. C. Stephenson's *Impulse*, founded on Xavier de Montepin's

“La Maison du Mari,” on December 9th, 1882, was a huge success, playing to full houses until the end of the following July, and then being revived in September with renewed success, though only for a brief period. As Captain Crichton Mr. Kendal gave a curiously clever representation of an affected military lady-killer, every tone and gesture being carefully studied, and adding something to the completeness of the portrait.

Indifferently played, *Young Folk's Ways*, a tame piece, with a clumsy and misleading title, produced on October 20th, 1883, would probably have died stillborn. As it was, it enjoyed a run of fifty nights, and afforded Mr. Kendal an opportunity of doing some clever love-making in the character of Estabrook, a good-natured artist; and then came a revival of *A Scrap of Paper*, with Mr. Kendal in his original part.

A marked success, however, was in store for the theatre in Mr. Pinero's version of Georges Ohnet's “Le Maître de Forges,” called *The Ironmaster*, produced on April 17th, 1884, which ran, with certain inevitable intervals,

until January 20th, 1885, Mr. Kendal impersonating Philippe Derblay with rare force and dignity, the part suiting his quiet, incisive method to perfection; while, when occasion served, he manifested a power and a passion which were all the more effective when contrasted with the recollection of the easy-going, nonchalant style usually identified with his impersonations.

From the splendid fashion in which *As You Like It* was put upon the stage of the St. James's Theatre on January 24th, 1885, it was evident that the Lyceum and the Princess's were not to enjoy the undisputed *prestige* of elaborate Shakespearean revivals. The beauty of the scenery and costumes spoke for itself, and displayed perfect taste as well as historical accuracy, and the revival was a notable one, worthy alike of the subject and the theatre. But, although the Orlando of Mr. Kendal again showed some good points and had its effective moments, it was not as successful as some other of his impersonations. It was rather a monotonous performance, dignified, capable, and picturesque, but somewhat commonplace in conception. The absence of variety of style,

of versatile gesture, of skilful modulation of voice, compelled a sense of sameness which robbed the character of some of its charm. This was followed by a revival of *The Queen's Shilling* and the production, on June 11th, of a comedietta called *The Castaway*, by Theyre Smith, in which Mr. Kendal appeared as Juan Larkspur. Then came a revival of *The Money Spinner*, and on October 31st the production of Mr. Pinero's comedy *Mayfair*.

The class of sentiment and situation so liberally provided for Parisians both in drama and in fiction, and devoured with so much avidity by the frequenters of the théâtres and the customers of the kiosks, having obviously gained some hold upon the taste of London audiences, was forcibly illustrated in this play, an adaptation of Sardou's "La Maison Neuve." The tone of the play was unmistakably French from beginning to end, and though the moral was unimpugnable, it was arrived at by the aid of at least two offensive incidents, only redeemed from repulsiveness by entirely admirable acting.

In *Mayfair* Mr. Kendal gave a very faithful and careful study of a type of man common

enough in modern society. Mr. Pinero, wise in his generation, feeling that his audience would probably not take much interest in mere petty tradespeople, lifted his *dramatis personæ* on to a somewhat higher social platform in the process of adaptation. In "La Maison Neuve" the heroine is the wife of one small shopkeeper and niece of another, slave to a round of petty drudgery while knowing herself capable of better things, her horizon bounded by the mean limits of a small haberdasher's shop, a relic of old-fashioned humdrum trading, as strong a contrast to the spirit of the age as Baudu's little shop in the Rue Michodière was to Octave Mouret's colossal "Bonheur des Dames;" and as Jean and Denise Baudu rebelled against the restrictions of "The Old Elbœuf," with its sordid barricade of cloths and flannels, so did Claire and René long for "higher society" in their little shop in the Rue Thévenot.

But in *Mayfair* Claire and René Pillerat were metamorphosed into Mr. and Mrs. Geoffrey Roydant, the husband being a rather snobbish young stockbroker, and both of the young couple

being consumed with vanity and discontent yearning to spread their small wings, and fly away westward down the wind of fashion. This they do, Geoffrey Roydant in particular going the pace, rushing upon ruin by his extravagant folly, becoming involved with an extravagant *demi-mondaine*, while his wife is entangled in a dangerous flirtation. Then, after a while, disillusioned and brought to their senses, they gladly fly back "on world-weary pinions," as the song has it, to the old home.

Mr. Kendal had a thankless part to play as Geoffrey Roydant, the ambitious and ungrateful young stockbroker, but made good capital out of it, rendered it as little offensive as fidelity to the dramatist's conception of the character would permit, and displayed at times a manly self-contempt and regret for his folly, expressed with a force and eloquence of real value to the play. Mr. Kendal's creation was life-like, intelligible, and artistically worked out, and Geoffrey Roydant, disagreeable as he was as a type of humanity, became an interesting stage-figure, and an impersonation of significance and worth.

This was followed on January 4th, 1886, by

a revival of *Impulse*; and on February 13th a new production gave Mr. Kendal one more opportunity of creating a *rôle* after his own heart.

Many years ago Charles Dickens, apostrophising dear old Tom Pinch, said, "There are some falsehoods, Tom, on which men mount as on bright wings towards Heaven." It was just the story of one of those noble lies that was told in *Antoinette Rigaud*, a play translated from the French of M. Desclandes by the late Ernest Warren. The piece was one so thoroughly French in *motif* and incident that it could only have been "adapted" at some risk of losing something of the lucidity in which, in its translated form, it was none too rich; but although the original was closely adhered to, there was nothing really objectionable in the St. James's version. There were risky situations, but the moral was sound, though it was only reached by somewhat devious and doubtful paths.

As Henri de Tourvel, the brother of Antoinette, who sacrifices his career and his honour for the sake of his sister, and incurs the odium

and disgrace of being deemed guilty, on his own confession, of a despicable attempt to compromise the girl he loves, and so compel her father to give her to him, Mr. Kendal was manly, frank, and acceptable throughout ; and in the great scene with Antoinette, and in that in which he gives in his papers to the old general, he displayed power and pathos of the truest kind.

On May 24th, 1886, Mr. Kendal found another opportunity of showing his ability to represent characters demanding, by virtue of the circumstances by which they are conditioned, the expression of passionate emotion. The new play at the St. James's Theatre, *The Wife's Sacrifice*, adapted by Messrs. Sydney Grundy and Sutherland Edwards from M.M. d'Ennery and Tarbé's "Martyre," which, in its turn, was a dramatic version of a *feuilleton* in a Parisian journal, suffered in a sense by being based upon a palpable improbability ; for, deep and true as is the reverence shown to the mother in France, it is at least open to discussion whether a daughter, no matter how devoted, would sacrifice her own fair fame to save the

reputation of her parent. That the sacrifice further involved the wrecking of her happiness and that of her husband is a detail of secondary importance. But, accepting the situation and unique moral idiosyncrasy conceived by the dramatists without questioning the reasonableness of either, the play was indisputably fertile in emotional incidents and opportunities for the display of histrionic power.

As the sorely-trying husband, Julian, Count de Moray, Mr. Kendal gave one of the carefully considered and well-balanced representations of well-bred, dignified, good-hearted manliness, in which he is seen at his best. Keeping himself well in hand, never forgetting that gentleness possesses its soul with something like patience, or at least refuses to parade its agony, there were yet moments, notably in the scenes with his self-accusing wife, in which Mr. Kendal displayed genuine power, which gained in effect, as such moments always do, by the contrast which they presented to the self-control and well-bred imperturbability of the other scenes. The impersonation was distinctly artistic, and emphatically assisted the

illusion of actuality, and the Count de Moray was accepted as a notable addition to Mr. Kendal's many excellent creations.

On March 7th, 1887, Mr. Kendal appeared as Lord Clancarty in the admirable revival of Tom Taylor's drama, *Lady Clancarty*, and gave a gallant, picturesque representation of the part; and in 1888 he took part in a series of revivals, including George W. Lovell's play, *The Wife's Secret*, in which he appeared as Sir Walter Amyott.

Upon the last night of the Hare and Kendal management Mr. Kendal appeared as Lieutenant Thorndyke in *The Squire*, and was enthusiastically received. In his speech at the close of the performance he paid a most graceful tribute to Mrs. Kendal, and expressed characteristically artistic and high-minded views of his profession.

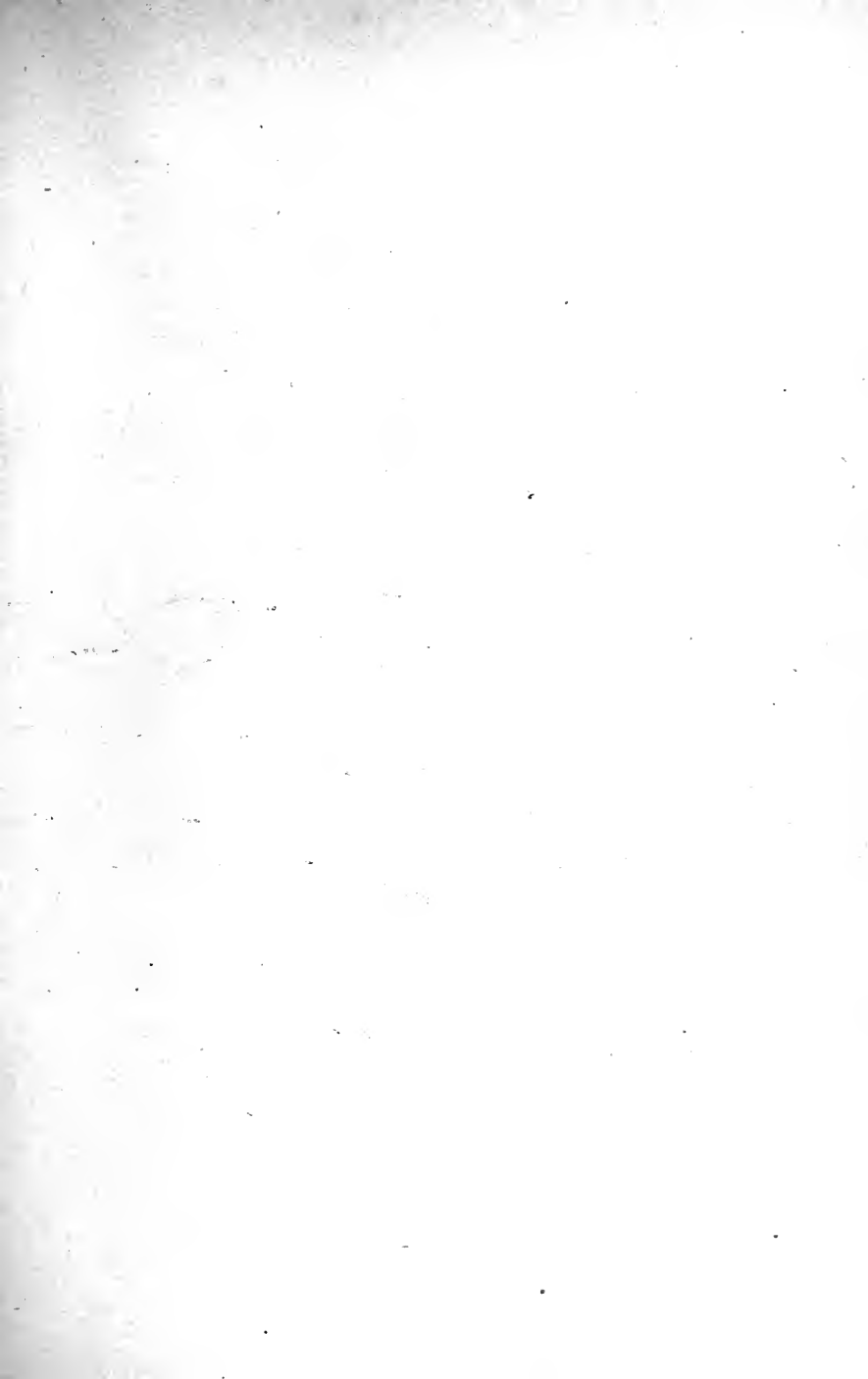
Since that time Mr. Kendal, accompanied by his wife, has toured in the provinces with great success, and also appeared in London, Mr. Kendal impersonating Ira Lee, "the poet of the prairies," in Mr. Pinero's comedy, *The Weaker Sex*,—first produced at the Theatre Royal,

Manchester, on September 28th, 1888, and afterwards at the Court Theatre on March 16th, 1889, the character being a finely conceived one, self-sacrifice and the resolution to “suffer and be strong” forming the dominant notes of the part, and the conditions tragically complex, the man being compelled to renounce his love for a daughter because of her mother’s love for himself. Mr. Kendal acted the difficult dual *rôle* of Ira Lee and Philip Lester with equal delicacy and strength, and made a distinct artistic success. Upon its first performance Mr. Kendal appeared in the less important part of Dudley Silchester, the devoted lover who, in the original production, married Lady Vivash, leaving the heroine, Sylvia, free to marry Ira Lee.

On May 25th, 1889, Mr. Kendal created the part of Sir John Molyneux in Mr. Sydney Grundy’s clever comedy, *A White Lie*, the character of the imperturbable, cold, unimpassioned, apparently indifferent, but really suspicious husband, being enacted by him with excellent art and *finesse*. The run of the piece terminated on July 12th, and on the 16th

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal were entertained at a banquet at the Hôtel Métropole, the Right Hon. Joseph Chamberlain, M.P., occupying the chair, and paying an eloquent and well-deserved tribute to the guests of the evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Kendal subsequently sailed for America with the good wishes of all who knew them, and commenced their tour with a completely successful production of *The Squire* at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, on October 14th, 1890.





MR. CHARLES WARNER, FROM A PHOTOGRAPH.

Which of us is happy in Our work
Which of us has his desire
to be is so substantial John Quincy
Charles Warner

CHARLES WARNER.

THE great body of English people, with their national fetishes of beef and beer and their insular scorn of kickshaws, are a little prone to exhibit a somewhat similar taste in art to that which distinguishes them in *menu* matters. Not for these diners the dainty table-triumphs of the disciples of Brillat-Savarin, nor for them the dramatic *soufflés* of the Gaiety, the *omelettes aux fines herbes* of the Lyceum, or the *cuvées reserves* of Criterion comedy. They long for more solid, substantial, satisfying fare, honestly believing that it is upon such diet, mental and physical, that the true Englishman thrives and is sustained. As Defoe put it, in his vigorous but coarse fashion,—

“The climate makes them terrible and bold,
And English beef their courage does uphold;
No danger can their daring spirit pall,
Always provided that their belly's full.”

The average Englishman likes to take his sentiment with full flavour and good body, and nothing pleases him so well upon the stage as the robust school of acting, full of muscular and moral energy, in the embodiment of which he likes to imagine that he sees himself, or at the least a typical John Bull, in whom he recognises an effulgent splendour, in the reflected glory of which he himself may bask.

It flatters his cultivated patriotism and his natural *amour-propre* to pass with one of these tempestuous and heroic personages through the storm and stress of his stage life, and in applauding the actor he virtually enjoys the issue of a testimonial to his own worth.

The redeeming feature of this self-worship by proxy is that there is generally, in the case of the actors who win enduring popularity, an under-current of sterling merit, which justifies a measure of hero-worship. Beneath the leather-lunged vociferation and the frenzied gesticulation may be heard and seen the controlling power of art, assigning a limit, if now and then a rather liberal one, to the demonstration of emotional excitement; and between the

lines of the moral copy-book headings and conventional platitudes may be read an honest purpose to indicate sentiments worthy of manhood at its best.

A popular favourite in the tempestuous school of acting, and one in whose work there has frequently been given evidence of genuine power as distinct from mere physical force, is Mr. Charles Warner, who, for a quarter of a century or so, has impersonated robust heroes with a persistency in itself little less than heroic. One could imagine that a spell of villainy would be welcomed as an absolute relief by Mr. Warner, whose virtue and magnanimity must have become a little monotonous. He must sometimes yearn, in his superlatively virtuous moments, to indulge in a murder, and his sublime self-abnegation, leading him to share his last crust with some starving woman, or seek heart-breaking work to win food for a white-faced wife, if possible one degree more heroic than himself, must sometimes have evoked a momentary mad desire to turn and rend the object of his self-sacrifice.

Broad-shouldered, well set-up, with a round, merry face, short, thoroughly English features, and a voice warranted to reach to the topmost gallery and remotest corner of any theatre in the universe, Mr. Warner is the sort of actor who takes his audience captive by sheer force of his personality. Not for him the patient beleaguering of a citadel or the subtle diplomacy exercised by a general who directs a battle from the rear. Mr. Warner is always in the front, at the head of his stage army, brandishing his sword, whooping his war-cry, leading, if occasion demands, a forlorn hope with magnificent courage to death or glory. To his credit be it added that it is generally to the latter, and that many a dramatic weakling has been carried in triumph on his broad shoulders to victory in the teeth of obstacles grave and beyond number.

That such pluck and daring go straight to the hearts of a British audience has often been proved by curious expressions of sympathy on the part of the audience towards the actor, whose trials and temptations, troubles and triumphs, they have made their own.

An amusing instance of this occurred when Mr. Warner was acting Coupeau in *Drink*—Charles Reade's dramatic version of MM. Zola, Busnach, and Gastineau's *L'Assommoir*—when one night, just as Coupeau was yielding afresh to the temptation which was the bane of his life, a good-natured sympathiser in the gallery called out with rough good-will, "Don't touch it, mate! Put it down!" So *naïve* an expression of interest was perhaps the truest tribute to the fidelity and power to the actor's art which he could have desired.

Of the strange tricks which are sometimes played at the expense of actors and actresses who have made something of a name Mr. Warner tells a very odd story, absolutely true, yet stranger than most fiction.

It is no uncommon thing for some miserable woman, haled before the bench for drunkenness and disorderly conduct, to calmly and without the shadow of justification describe herself as an actress; but Mr. Warner's story is one of even more impudent and serious personation.

Upon the occasion of his farewell *matinée* at Drury Lane Mr. Warner's daughter, Gracie, made her *début* as Juliet. On the actor's arrival in Australia he received a letter from his brother, stating that a gentleman had called upon him respecting his cousin's marriage with Mr. Warner's sister. As Mr. Warner has no sister, this naturally surprised his brother, and subsequently himself. Then the gentleman's story came out. His cousin, he said, had seen Mr. Warner's sister play Juliet, had fallen in love with her, and married her! Circumstances arose to which his family, not without good reason, objected, and he had come to Mr. Warner's brother for a consultation as to what could be done. He was assured that the woman was an impostor. It appeared that she had persuaded her dupe that she had actually played Juliet at the Drury Lane performance; that Miss Gracie Warner had been seized with stage fright, and she had been sent for at the last moment. In proof of her story she displayed a number of faded bouquets, ostensibly tributes to her art. The unfortunate gentleman married her, and soon repented.

Since then he has been confined in an asylum, while the woman is still at large. Mr. Warner adds, with one of his quiet twinkles, " Detectives were set to work, and my sham sister's career was found to be the reverse of saintly."

Mr. Warner, despite his shoutings and his athletic exercises, possesses a fund of genuine emotional power, and on many an occasion has proved that he not only has a keen perception of the *nuances* of human character, but can represent them with fidelity and *finesse*.

It was about the year 1863, when he was only seventeen years old, that Charles Warner made his first appearance upon the stage at Henley-on-Thames, and after a brief period of apprenticeship in the provinces he came to London in 1864, and made a somewhat ambitious *début* upon the metropolitan stage at the Princess's Theatre as Romeo. Then followed a period of comparative obscurity, spent in various theatres, including a three years' engagement at Drury Lane, under Mr. F. B. Chatterton's management, during which he had the opportunity of taking part in some excellent Shakespearean revivals. But

it was some time later, when a member of Mr. Liston's company at the Olympic, that the actor got his first real chance, and took advantage of it, by creating with great success the part of Charley Burrige in Byron's comedy *Daisy Farm*, which led to his engagement by Mrs. Bateman, during which he played the part of Alfred Jingle in Albery's *Pickwick*, after Mr. Irving's creation of the character at the Lyceum.

Mr. Warner's reminiscences of his early days are often amusing enough, and not without significance, the contrast between the stage of to-day and that of seven-and-twenty years ago, when, as a stage-struck boy of seventeen, he ran away from home and obtained his first engagement at Henley, being sufficiently striking. Mr. Warner likes to tell how, in those far-off days, he played thirteen parts in the first week of his appearance upon any stage, having to master two, that of Bras Rouge in *The Mysteries of Paris*, and Muley in *The Castle Spectre*, after twelve o'clock upon the day of his arrival, in order to appear in them the same evening.

That this experience was valuable, however, was at once evident, and Mr. Warner soon became of necessity a "quick study," being absolutely letter-perfect before he was twenty in the parts of King John, Hubert, Faulconbridge, Romeo, Othello, Shylock, St. Pierre in *The Wife, The Stranger*, William in *Black-eyed Susan*; Iago, William Tell, and Ingomar, as well as fairly coached in dozens of others.

It was during this first engagement that Mr. Warner was hauled over the coals by his irate manager for not wearing a pair of kid gloves in the wedding scene in *All That Glitters is not Gold*, when, as a matter of fact, he had taxed his meagre salary of eighteen shillings a week to the extent of purchasing a most delicate pair of flesh-coloured gloves, the similarity of which to nature misled old Mr. Rogers, the manager, and was eventually the cause of Mr. Warner's leaving his company and coming to London, as the country manager declined to give the boy-actor an extra two shillings a week. "Great events from little causes spring," and to this dispute, arising from a pair of pink kid gloves, the metropolitan stage owed a new recruit,

destined ere long to develop into a popular favourite of the first order.

Mr. Warner, like most actors, had his little slips and *contretemps* in his early days, and one of the most amusing occurred when he was quite a stripling, acting at Drury Lane under the management of Phelps, who was always extremely kind to the young player, who gained an invaluable knowledge of Shakespeare under the Phelps *régime*.

One evening the great actor called the young beginner into his room at Drury Lane and said, "Now, my lad, I'm going to make an actor of you, and I think you've got the stuff in you. *Richelieu* will be my next play, and I shall cast you for François. You must take great pains, and I'll assist you in every way that I can." Charles Warner was naturally in the seventh heaven of delight at this, as he had never yet played so important a part. The first night came. It will be remembered that after *Richelieu's* great soliloquy François rushes in, and the great Cardinal exclaims, "The despatch, boy! Life—death——" in breathless excitement. At this supreme moment Phelps gave a tremendously

grim and prolonged "Ha!" which so frightened the latest François that he fell on his knees mute. Phelps repeated the lines; but François was still dumb, choking with nervous excitement. Again Phelps repeated, "The despatch, boy!" Then, instead of uttering the lengthy and important speech revealing the conspiracy, all he could stammer out was, "I—I—haven't got it!" Phelps growled out, quite audibly, "Oh! d—you! You're ruined!" and the actor got off the stage as best he could. He hid himself in his room, and cried like a child.

Before the performance on the next night Phelps sent for Charles Warner, who obeyed the summons tremblingly, but to his intense relief the veteran and kindly actor said to him, in a gentle and fatherly fashion, "Come here, my boy. Why, how nervous you were! You'll be all right to-night, eh?"

"Sir," said the lad, "it was that dreadful 'Ha!' You didn't do it at rehearsal!" At this the old tragedian laughed outright. The lad *was* all right at night, and afterwards Phelps was Charles Warner's best friend.

In those far-off days, too, Mr. Warner

enacted the part of Orpheus in Mr. Wills' adaptation of *Medea in Corinth*, and remained with the Lyceum company for two years, subsequently migrating to Sadler's Wells with Mrs. Bateman, under whose management he appeared in a number of Shakespearean parts, his success in which Mr. Warner has always attributed in large measure to the excellent training which he obtained in Shakespearean impersonation while acting with Samuel Phelps.

Then followed a series of successes at the Vaudeville, where Mr. Warner's impersonations of Harry Dornton in *The Road to Ruin*, Puff in *The Critic*, Charles Surface in *The School for Scandal*, a dashing and breezy impersonation, and other rôles of importance in the revivals of old comedy, paved the way for his success as Charles Middlewick, which part he created in Byron's evergreen comedy *Our Boys*—since played thousands of times—which was first produced at the Vaudeville Theatre on the night of January 16th, 1875, and when read by the author to the company was thought very little of, and given about a month as the probable duration of its stage life.

On January 6th, 1877, Mr. Warner appeared as Vladimir in *The Danischeffs*, at the St. James's Theatre. In 1878 he was engaged at the Princess's, acting the part of Henry Shore in Mr. Wills's drama *Jane Shore*, and appearing at a Lyceum *matinée* as Jack Wyatt in *Two Roses*, Mr. Irving being the Digby Grant of the occasion, and in a Princess's revival of Tom Taylor's powerful drama, *Never too Late to Mend*, in 1879, he scored heavily as Tom Robinson, painting the good-hearted but foolishly weak character to perfection, and showing to equal advantage as the easy-going, devil-may-care fellow of the first act ; the hardened, desperate convict ; and the repentant and cheery figure of the later scenes, thereby giving a convincing proof of his artistic versatility, and confirming the good opinion of his critics.

It was on Monday, June 2nd, 1879, that Mr. Warner first showed London playgoers the powerful realism which he held at command in his remarkable impersonation of the drunken Coupeau in *Drink*. As naturalism was as the very breath of life, not only to

Emile Zola, the author of *L'Assommoir*, but also to Charles Reade, the adaptor of the gruesome story for the stage, Mr. Warner obviously determined not to be found lacking in the same quality, and his creation, terrible and loathsome as it was at times, was a piece of genuine art, evidencing close study and an entirely remarkable force in reproducing his impressions.

Mr. Warner's Coupeau was a revelation. No one had suspected him of the possession of so much latent power, of so shrewd an appreciation of character, of so excellent a capacity for reproducing the minutest detail of appearance, gesture, and pose of the wretched hero of the tragedy—if one may call the piece a tragedy—with the microscopic fidelity to detail of a Gerard Douw. Coupeau, in Mr. Warner's hands, became an incarnate homily. By a thousand subtle touches, as well as by the broader painting of the delirium scene, the actor showed with most admirable art the utter degradation brought about by drink. With all the pathos of the horrifying contrast between the bright cheery young *ouvrier* of the early part of the

play, and the wretched, drink-sodden, ragged maniac of the later scene, Mr. Warner preached his awful sermon from behind the footlights with a force and mastery of detail which appalled his audience, but wrote him down once and for all time a genuine artist of the first rank. The one regrettable point in connection with the impersonation is, that Mr. Warner has never given the public any other creation quite so powerful, quite so complete in its tragic hideousness, since Zola's works, of course, only lend themselves to a drama of degradation; but such works as *Drink*, such studies as *Coupeau*, by showing as in a mirror the actualities of depravity and vice, may be conceded an ethical value none the less true, none the less effective, that it is afforded by the stage instead of the pulpit. Mr. Warner's *Coupeau* was the very incarnation of that terrible tragedy of everyday life which slays its tens of thousands year by year, but the very horror of which is obscured by its familiarity. It is well that now and then the world should see the monster in all its hideousness by the aid of such art as that which made *Coupeau* a nightmare-horror,

with the added misery that we knew it to be true. The gradual degradation of body and soul, which is the inevitable price to be paid for the indulgence of the drink-passion, were shown by Mr. Warner with genuine art. True, that the ultimate outcome was loathsome and appalling ; true that the spectacle of the hideous, bloated, besotted wretch was even more repellent than it was pitiable ; true, that the horror of *delirium tremens* was portrayed with revolting fidelity, but it may fairly be contended not only that the actor was compelled by the conditions of his art to be realistic or nothing, but, further, that never even in his most agonising moments could he be said to have exaggerated the terrors of actuality.

It is interesting to remember, in connection with this much-discussed impersonation, that Sarah Bernhardt and Coquelin, both of whom were familiar with the original creation of the part by Gill-Naza, took more than one opportunity of studying Mr. Warner's acting as Coupeau ; that Coquelin described it as one of the finest dramatic efforts ever seen on any stage ; that Francisque Sarcey, than whom no

better judge could be desired, described Mr. Warner's rendering as altogether superior to that of Gill-Naza; while the author, Charles Reade, showed his appreciation by sending the actor a loving cup, inscribed on the front: "Me Carolus Carolo Frater In Arte Dedit," and on the base: "To Charles Warner, in memory of Jean Coupeau and Tom Robinson, and how I profited by his humour, his tenderness, his passion, and that great art of keeping the stage alive, in which he yields to no living actor—this loving-cup is presented by Charles Reade, July 1879."

Drink sufficed to fill the Princess's Theatre until February 16th, 1880, when it was followed by a successful revival of *The Streets of London*, in which Mr. Warner was seen to great advantage as Badger, finding opportunities for the display of considerable versatility, and holding the sympathy of the audience intact from the rise to the final fall of the curtain.

At the end of September in the same year Mr. Warner migrated to the New Sadler's Wells Theatre, and there appeared as Othello and in other leading parts in a series of revivals

of Shakespeare, the "legitimate" drama and old comedy, proving by his careful acting and by the ease with which he adapted himself to the various rôles, how thoroughly he was master of his art. Mr. Warner's Othello was now and then a little too inclined to storm and rave, but if not as unconventional as a reading of the part must necessarily be nowadays in order to show distinction, was at least the obvious outcome of conscientious and intelligent study.

During this engagement Mr. Warner also assumed amongst other parts those of Ingomar in *The Son of the Wilderness*, in which he emphasised the vigorous qualities of the barbarian with all the strength of brain and muscle ; Charles Surface, in which he brought out to the full the devil-may-care, swaggering recklessness of the rôle, but without breaking away in any marked degree from traditional "business," and Harry Dornton in *The Road to Ruin*, in which again Mr. Warner was energetic in the extreme, and acted well, if conventionally.

On March 14th, 1881, Mr. Warner created with marked and instant success the rôle of

Michael Strogoff, the young Russian soldier, in Mr. H. J. Byron's drama of that name, adapted from the French of MM. d'Ennery and Jules Verne, and produced at the Adelphi Theatre.

Upon the first night of the new piece an accident happened to Mr. Warner, whose courage and loyal determination to go on at all cost saved what might have been a fatal collapse of the play at a critical moment.



MR. WARNER AS MICHAEL
STROGOFF.

When Michael Strogoff, bearing despatches to the Russian Grand Duke, beleaguered by the Emir of Bokhara, was set upon by Ivan Ogareff,

the villain of the piece, played by Mr. Fernandez with his usual power and ability, a duel with daggers ensued, and in the excitement Mr. Warner received a severe wound in the hand. The blood streamed from it; Mr. Fernandez was horror-stricken at the mishap, but Mr. Warner, though sickened with pain and faint from loss of blood, kept the wounded hand behind him out of the sight of the audience, and played his part to the end, nearly fainting after the fall of the curtain. It happened that Mrs. Warner was in the audience at the time, and did not know of the accident; but a friend who was with her heard of it, and managed to keep her in her stall after the performance, instead of letting her go round behind the scenes to her husband, when, as soon as the house was empty, the curtain being as usual drawn up, the first intimation of the accident was conveyed to Mrs. Warner by the sight of her husband, pale and faint, upon a couch on the stage, surrounded by a group of sympathising brother actors. The wound proved a serious one, but with characteristic thoroughness Mr. Warner continued his impersonation, though for some time

he had to play with his arm in a sling—a touch of realism with which he would willingly have dispensed.

On August 1st Mr. Warner appeared successfully as Richard Pride in a revival of Dion Boucicault's *Janet Pride* and on September 8th as Tom Robinson in a revival of *It's Never too Late to Mend*, in which he was seen to great advantage as the good-natured, erring fellow, impudent and swaggering at first, then desperate and brutalised by the horrors of convict life, and finally reformed, and jovial, and manly, as Mr. Warner knows so well how to make his characters. As Walter Lee, the artist hero of Mr. Pettitt's drama *Taken from Life*, produced at the Adelphi on December 31st, 1881, Mr. Warner's robust temperament was not quite so well adapted to a rôle demanding a somewhat more subdued treatment than the characters usually undertaken by him.

The new year brought Mr. Warner an opportunity of creating a character differing totally in style from the majority of those with which he had become identified in the past; and when Mr. Charles Reade's dramatic version

of the Laureate's beautiful idyllic poem, *Dora*, was placed upon the Adelphi stage, in January 1883, the Farmer Allan proved to be something of a surprise to those who had yet to learn the quiet power of which Mr. Warner has the command. The make-up of the actor as the old farmer was artistic in the extreme; so too were his suggestions of age in walk and bearing; and the combined tenderness and rough, stubborn self-will of the old man were conveyed by Mr. Warner with excellent skill. He was never "out of the picture" as Farmer Allan. The mannerisms peculiar to melodramatic heroes were discarded as though they had never been, and in their place was shown a quiet, powerful, convincing style, which was not only in itself a higher form of art, but served to show that when the opportunity arose the actor could keep himself well in hand, and indicate strong emotion without the meretricious aid of noisy declamation or impassioned gesticulation. His Farmer Allan was a notably excellent creation, well thought out, and rendered with a quiet realism as artistic as it was satisfying.



MR. CHARLES WARNER AS CHRISTIAN CHRISTIANSEN IN
"STORMBEATEN."



In *Stormbeaten*, Mr. Robert Buchanan's dramatic version of his powerful novel “God and the Man,” produced at the Adelphi on March 14th, 1883, Mr. Warner, as Christian Christiansen, had a picturesque and effective part, of which he made the most, his acting throughout being extremely vigorous. In the sensational scene of the drama, in which, gaunt, grim, and horrible to look upon, he had to go through a quantity of unpleasant “business” upon an ice-floe, he was appallingly realistic, and reminded the audience of his terrible scene in *Drink* by his forcible and unflinching fidelity to nature. The principal burden of the play was again cast upon Mr. Warner, and from first to last he carried it triumphantly along with apparent ease, and seemed to enjoy his work quite as much as did his audience.

Playgoers naturally anticipated great things from the collaboration of two such skilful dramatists as Messrs. Sims and Pettitt, and *In the Ranks*, produced at the Adelphi on October 6th, 1883, proved to be a good play and a clever play, but neither so good nor so clever as former work from the same pens

had led the public to expect ; the new play was emotional and realistic, topical and amusing, but the last only in a somewhat disappointing degree. The ready wit, the keen satire, the genuine pathos of other plays by Mr. Sims were not conspicuously present. There were humour, satire, and pathos in the new drama, but the humour was a little forced, the satire not always wisely directed, the pathos not always sympathy-compelling.

None the less *In the Ranks* undoubtedly served to provide Mr. Charles Warner with an effective *rôle*. The principal burden of the action fell to Mr. Warner's share as Ned Drayton, and he played his part with immense vigour and great ability. His genial face, of the true Anglo-Saxon type, won its way very quickly to the hearts of the audience, and whether as the handsome, prosperous young heir, in the opening scenes of the play ; or the broken-hearted, disgraced man ; or the manly, well got-up soldier, he looked and acted his part to perfection. In some of his scenes with the heroine Mr. Warner's acting was extremely affecting, and the strong man's agony was

manifest in every look and gesture. A little prone to over-act the more serious passages and tear the passion to tatters, Mr. Warner was occasionally a little too tempestuous; but, judged as a whole, his Ned Drayton was a vigorous, artistic creation, and a notable addition to his *répertoire*.

On April 4th, 1885, a characteristic drama by Mr. Sims, called *The Last Chance*, was produced at the Adelphi, with Mr. Charles Warner as the unfortunate hero, Frank Daryll, one of those handsome, good-hearted, repentant prodigals—very manly and tender with his wife and broken-hearted old father; very vigorous and scornful in his righteous indignation—of which Mr. Warner knows so well how to make a noteworthy and sympathetic figure.

The play itself abounded in exaggerations, the humour was often strained, the moral platitudes hackneyed both in expression and idea, and there was a good deal of claptrap nonsense about the condition of the masses, cheap philanthropy, and semi-socialistic fustian, which a writer of Mr. Sims's ability must have

introduced in defiance of his own convictions. But exaggeration was the fault of the whole play. The pathos, the misery, the vice, all were overdone, and the success of the piece was made by a series of exciting situations, excellent acting, and effective scenery. It might, however, be urged, not without justice, that if such plays serve to show but one man or woman the snares and pitfalls of everyday life, the misery that dogs the steps of sin, the peace and happiness that are alone to be found in virtue, a dramatist may well be excused for painting the pictures in glaring colours, if in that way he succeeds in making himself understood.

Mr. Warner's robust and manly realisation of the author's creation, Frank Daryll, was, in its way, excellent. The bluff, generous, careless ne'er-do-well suited the actor's broad and strenuous style to perfection, and the *rôle* proved a distinct addition to the popular heroes of the stage, of which the actor has, in his day, created so many.

On August 8th of the same year Mr. Warner resumed his favourite impersonation of Tom Robinson in *It's Never too Late to Mend*, and

in 1886 he took up the part of Tom Jones, during part of the run of Mr. Robert Buchanan's play, *Sophia*, at the Vaudeville, giving due emphasis to the more manly and lovable qualities of Fielding's scapegrace hero, and keeping the drunken scene and other dubious moments of the play within discreet, well-defined limits. Here, too, in July Mr. Warner appeared as Harry Dornton in an excellent revival of *The Road to Ruin*, and the only fault of his impersonation was an excess of earnestness.

In Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's romantic drama, *The Noble Vagabond*, produced at the Princess's Theatre on December 22nd, 1886, Mr. Warner was cast for the hero, Ralph Lester, and he undoubtedly made the figure picturesque and sympathetic; but the play was not a popular success, and despite the fact that its title seemed to promise an ideal character for an actor of Mr. Warner's calibre, the *rôle* was not one of his marked successes.

During the year 1887 Mr. Warner created the part of Colonel Charles Prescott, in Mr. William Gillette's drama *Held by the Enemy*, produced at the Princess's Theatre on April

2nd, and his impersonation was marked by a characteristic robust manliness and chivalrous tenderness, which compelled and retained the sympathy of the audience for Colonel Prescott through all his trying vicissitudes, and made the part a pleasant and striking memory. On July 2nd the play was transferred to the Vaudeville, where Mr. Warner continued his original impersonation with signal success; in August he appeared at a Gaiety *matinée* in *Loyal Love*, and on December 9th was the subject of a remarkably successful benefit *matinée* at Drury Lane prior to his departure for a tour in Australia, during which he appeared in most of his popular parts with great success, only returning to England, full of pleasant memories of his cordial welcome in the Antipodes, on August 8th, 1890.

In the actor's life, perhaps more than in any other, the tragic and the comic tread most closely upon each other's heels, and of the sadder side of life Mr. Warner had a remarkable experience when in Australia.

The opera of *Faust* was produced with great magnificence, and on the opening night Federici

was to play Mephistopheles for the first time. He was painfully nervous, and seemed oppressed with a vague presentiment of some coming evil. He said to his wife when leaving home for the theatre that he did not think he would ever sing again. His fears were realised in terrible fashion. After uttering the last note, as Mephistopheles descends into Hades, the singer gave one deep sigh and fell—dead!

Nor was this all. At the funeral, at which thousands came together, as the calamity was the subject of universal sorrow, the clergyman, a venerable man, had only just spoken the solemn words, "In the midst of life we are in death," when he fell forward senseless on the brink of the grave, and had to be carried away attended by his doctor, who happened to be on the ground. The service for the dead came to an abrupt halt. There was no other clergyman within some miles of the spot, and eventually it was Charles Warner who read the remainder of the service over his dead friend and brother artist—a strange and pathetic instance of the truth that a man in his time "plays many parts."

Mr. Warner made his re-appearance in London on the stage of Drury Lane, on September 6th, as Harry Dunstable in Henry Pettitt and Augustus Harris's drama, *A Million of Money*, enacting the part of a curious kind of hero, a big-hearted, generous, rather stupid fellow, yet with wit enough to recognise that his so-called friends are bleeding him at every pore after he inherits his vast fortune, while kindly enough not to check them in their sponging operations. Many of the situations in the play are highly improbable. So, too, are the circumstances which condition the life of the hero; but by a characteristic "go" and thoroughness, a frank geniality, an artistically controlled display of passion and contemptuous indignation when the adventuress of the play, having tricked and fooled and ruined him, laughs in his face and dismisses him, Mr. Warner gave proof of his excellent capacity for making the utmost of the material at his disposal. So thoroughly, indeed, did the actor succeed in blurring all the improbabilities and inconsistencies of the character, and gripping the sympathy of his audience by hearty manliness,

frank humour, tender love-making, and strong, passionate indignation and remorse, that the more demonstrative section could only express its feelings adequately by inarticulate cries and wild whistles and cat-calls—a primitive but indisputable proof of ebullient delight. Mr. Warner contrived to give a semblance of possibility to the figure in the play and its surroundings, and his efforts at least served to prove that he was not only an earnest actor, but that his personal popularity was beyond dispute.

Like most of the popular actors of the period, Mr. Warner off the stage is essentially a domesticated man. His charming house in the north of London is a very storehouse of artistic and interesting things, as well as a miniature Zoo of pet animals, all of whom know and love their master.

In the actor's pretty rooms, ivories from Japan, hundreds of pieces of rare and dainty china, including a splendid collection of old Wedgwood and Dresden of the best periods, stand upon every available resting-place, or gleam softly from within the security of a cabinet ; and one magnificent piece of Japanese

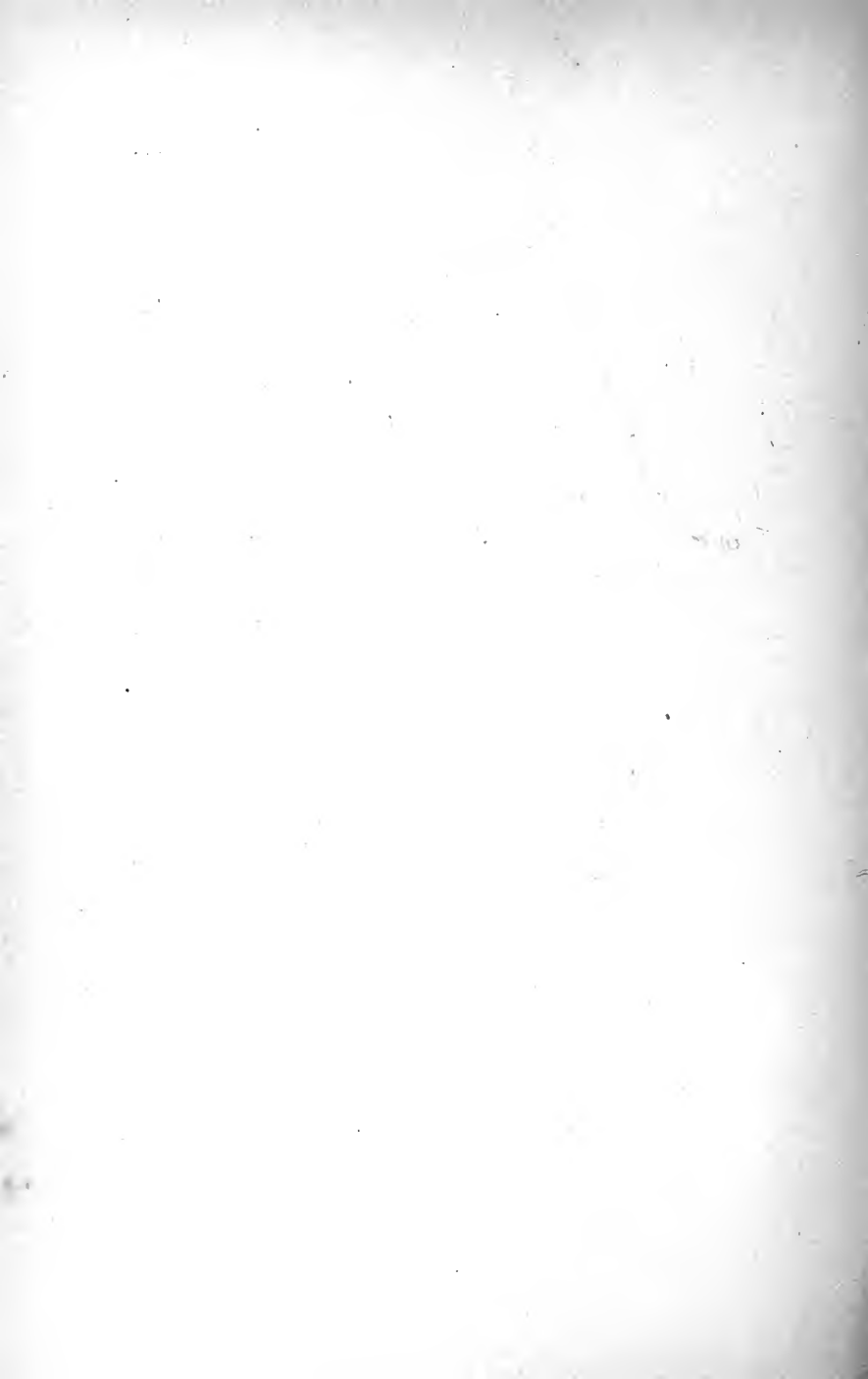
carved ivory and mother-o'-pearl—a large vase of flowers, with birds hovering over it—has, as so exquisite a bit of work deserves, the honour of an easel to itself.

On all sides are souvenirs of the actor's travels—silver services from Colombo, ivory elephants, Spanish fans, and a hundred beautiful things of the kind; and that of which Mr. Warner is proudest, the handsome loving-cup given to him by Charles Reade, and a marble statuette, presented to him by Mr. Walter Gooch on the hundredth night of *Drink*.

Amid such pleasant and artistic surroundings the popular actor spends such leisure as he has. His strapping son is a handsome, sturdy fellow, musician, boxer, fencer, student, boater, cricketer—all that an English lad should be, and an aspirant to histrionic honours as well, when in good time he shall have been to Oxford or Cambridge; and his clever and charming daughter has inherited so fully her father's talent, that she has already fulfilled profitable engagements. His huge St. Bernard, a faithful creature, daughter of the dog that played in *Stormbeaten* with Mr. Warner; and a chattering

magpie, which the actor brought from New Zealand upon his return from his recent tour through Australasia, where he made so many friends and met with so much success that ere long he will make a return visit, are features, too, of his home life.

Mr. Warner is devoted to his home, and everything therein, and in return has the happiness of knowing that he enjoys the goodwill and affection of all about him, and of troops of friends who have learned to value him both as an actor and a man.





MR. ARTHUR CECIL. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY THE STEREOSCOPIC
COMPANY.

Yours faithfully
Arthur Cecil

ARTHUR CECIL.

MR. ARTHUR CECIL, who comes of a family of hereditary solicitors, if one may use the term, and is said to have to this day a peculiar affection for a black bag, carried in season and out of season with a devotion worthy of a better cause, attained his professional majority in 1890, as it was on Easter Monday 1869 that he appeared for the first time at the old Gallery of Illustration in Regent Street, as a member of the German Reed Operetta Company, as Mr. Churchman, in Mr. W. S. Gilbert's *No Cards*, and as Box, in Messrs. Burnand and Sullivan's operetta, *Box and Cox*.

Like a shrewd and conscientious artist, Mr. Cecil has been learning something ever since, adding continually to the *technique* of his art, polishing and refining, elaborating and discarding, until now that he has come of age in his profession he ranks with the most

popular and able players of the period, two not necessarily concurrent conditions.

Mr. Cecil's method upon the stage is very much that of the miniaturist in another form of art, with the exception that while miniature painting proper is somewhat of a derelict from a dead-and-gone age, the microscopic character-painting of the stage is more and more a thing of the day, and the note of an essentially progressive dramatic school.

And yet there is, too, in such acting as Mr. Cecil's something of the delicacy of touch, something suggestive of a leisurely ripening to maturity, something, if one may venture upon such a parallel, of the concentrated labour of the old-time monks, who spent their lives in completing in the richest perfection of elaborate detail their art products in the shape of missal, psalter, or tome, such as Friar's Jerome's "Beautiful Book," of which, when at last the devoted hand put down its pencil, it was with the knowledge that all was done, that the work was "finished, down to the leaf and the snail; down to the eyes on the peacock's tail."

Some such conscientious completeness of

execution characterises Mr. Arthur Cecil's acting, and has from the first lent it a respectability, and latterly a refinement, often out of proportion to the apparent artistic value of the part. Even in the wild extravagance of a boisterous farce like *The Magistrate*, when the utmost boundaries of probability are overstepped in the interests of irresistible comicality, it is impossible not to recognise a certain artistic restraint and definite method, paradoxical as the assertion may seem; and one feels how hopelessly impossible and unfunny such extravagant vagaries would be enacted by a less able performer. Mr. Arthur Cecil's Mr. Posket is just credible enough to be amusing in the highest degree, but in less capable control it would be outside the boundary of possibility, and therefore, at once, unacceptable, absurd possibly offensive, and very certainly tiresome.

Mr. Cecil's stage life has been full of the variety which is of so much value in training an actor, enabling him not only to impersonate all sorts of characters almost equally well, but to discern in which particular direction his peculiar talent lies, and to develop that

talent to its utmost extent. Mr. Cecil's experience with the German Reed company was specially valuable in striking the key-note of his professional career, as the kind of work then entrusted to him, and the class of audience which formed the regular *clientèle* of the Gallery of Illustration, demanded just the quiet, shrewd, whimsical, highly-finished acting method which Mr. Cecil had at command, and which, as time went on, mellowed and perfected itself, like good wine, almost imperceptibly, the richer body and bouquet only being gratefully recognised by connoisseurs when a new bottle was opened in the form of a new character.

In 1874 Mr. Cecil became a member of the Globe company, sustaining the *rôles* of Jonathan Wagstaff in Mr. Gilbert's comedy, *Committed for Trial*, and Mr. Justice Jones in James Albery's comedy, *Wig and Gown*, showing in both the quiet, well-balanced humour which is his distinctive characteristic ; and on December 19th of the same year he invested Dr. Caius, in a Gaiety revival of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, with a shrewd, clean-cut whimsicality of his own, which was further evidenced in his

bright and crisp impersonation of Touchstone—so tiresome a cap-and-bells philosopher unless admirably acted—in a revival of *As You Like It*, at the Opéra Comique. During the same year Mr. Cecil impersonated at the Gaiety Theatre Duke Anatole in Messrs. Reece and Lecocq's *Island of Bachelors*; Charles in H. J. Byron's *Oil and Vinegar*; and on the occasion of his benefit *matinée*, in January 1876, Monsieur Jaques in the musical comedietta of that name, and Sir Harcourt Courtly in a revival of *London Assurance*, the latter being a most finished and delightful piece of true comedy. Mr. Cecil also added to his already excellent reputation by his impersonation of Tourbillon in *To Parents and Guardians*, and in 1876 made still further progress in the favour of the playgoing public by such excellent creations as Eustace Chapuis, at the Haymarket, in Tom Taylor's *Anne Boleyn*; Dr. Downward in Wilkie Collins's powerful play *Miss Gwilt*, a dramatisation of *Armada*, in which part he displayed no mean amount of power, and a most convincing realism; and Sir Woodbine Grafton in *Peril*, as a member of Mr. Bancroft's company

at the little Prince of Wales's Theatre in Tottenham Court Road. Mr. Cecil's careful and delicately elaborated study of Sir Woodbine Grafton left nothing to be desired, and fully confirmed the judgment of those who years before had recognised in the actor one of the coming comedians of the best school.

The reserve of tenderness and pathos which must form part of the latent power of a comedian of Mr. Cecil's class was admirably brought out in the following year, 1876, in his creation of the character of the Rev. Noel Haygarth, in Savile Rowe's, or, in other words, Mr. Clement Scott's, delightful little piece, *The Vicarage*, adapted from Octave Feuillet's *Le Village*, in which the actor displayed a refinement and delicacy of conception of the part which stamped him as of the first order of talent; and in 1878 he created with conscientious finish the minor part of the Russian agent Baron Stein in *Diplomacy*, by Messrs. B. C. Stephenson and Clement Scott, giving the character distinction by a clever make-up, and a still more clever indication of the very nature of the man by minutely studied gestures, tones, and bearing.

On January 11th, 1879, Mr. Cecil took up the part of Sam Gerridge in a revival of *Caste* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and his rough specimen of the British working-man was to the full as faithful and satisfying a piece of character-acting as any of the more polished creations which had preceded it; nor was he less successful in his impersonation of Tom Dibbles in *Good for Nothing*, which afforded him one more opportunity for the display of his broader methods, and made an excellent companion picture to the Sam Gerridge, which had come as a revelation to those who had only known him in his more delicately finished rôles.

On September 27th of the same year Mr. Cecil created, with his usual care and consequent effect, the rôle of John Hammond, M.P., in *Duty*; and on May 1st, 1880, he took Mr. Hare's old part of Beau Farintosh in a revival of *School* at the Haymarket, and gave an almost painfully realistic study of the doddering old *roué*, no single movement of the feeble body, no tone of the high-pitched quavering voice of senility, being without its value in completing

the lifelike portrait of a very objectionable type of old man. Mr. Cecil resumed this character, and also that of the Rev. Noel Haygarth when *School* and *The Vicarage* were again revived on November 27th.

Mr. Cecil, with his gift of painting the *minutiae* of character with such telling effect, found a peculiarly fascinating subject for the exercise of his art in his impersonation of Colley Cibber in the Haymarket revival of *Masks and Faces* on February 5th, 1881, when there was not a fold of the dainty lace ruffles, not a hair of the elaborate *toupee*, not a line of the wrinkled face, not a wave of the delicate hand, not a movement of the foppish cane,—which did not seem to have been the subject of special study, so admirably did every detail fit into its place in the formation of an ideally complete representation of a character in itself so excellently adapted for the display of Mr. Cecil's most distinctive qualities. In alternation with Mr. Bancroft, Mr. Cecil also played Triplet in this revival, but, while it was a careful and artistic performance, it did not prove so completely convincing as that of the old cynic.

On June 11th Mr. Cecil added to his collection of dramatic miniatures a delicately executed impersonation of Lord Ptarmigan in a revival of *Society*; and on September 24th made an extremely clever study of the unsympathetic part of the mischief-making Baron Verduret, in *Honour*, by Mr. Barrymore, produced at the Court Theatre. As Desmarets, in *Plot and Passion*, at the Haymarket, Mr. Cecil appeared on November 26th, but the part did not seem to suit his style as well as others, although his customary careful study of the *rôle* was still apparent. Nor was the actor seen at his best in the character of John Stratford, in *Odette*, the same conscientiousness being almost too obvious, and taking somewhat from the spontaneity of the representation, while for once Mr. Cecil's instinct was somewhat at fault in dressing, or over-dressing, the part. As the Duke of Debonnaire, in *Time will Tell*, in which Mr. Cecil appeared at Bridgewater House for the benefit of a charity, he was once more seen quite at his best, his jaunty cynicism, languid drawl, and finicking affectation being inimitably humorous; and again as the Hon. Penley

Chivers, the dabbler in high art, and impetuous dangler after the rich old maiden aunt, in *Comrades*, at the Court Theatre, on December 16th, 1882, he was quietly humorous to a degree which made this minor character one of the most entertaining figures in the cast.

Upon the production of Mr. Pinero's comedy, *The Rector, a Story of Four Friends*, at the Court Theatre on March 24th, 1883, Mr. Cecil created the part of Connor Hennessy with all his characteristic finish and nicety of detail; and in *The Millionaire*, Mr. G. W. Godfrey's adaptation of Mr. Edmund Yates's novel *Kissing the Rod*, produced at the Court on October 4th, 1883, he was entrusted with the creation of the rôle of Mr. Guyon, the vain and selfish old father of the heroine. Mr. Guyon displayed a slight tendency towards caricature, and his make-up was preposterous, but the details of the part were carefully thought out and cleverly rendered. In the mincing tones and ineffable conceit of the man there was just a suggestion of a somewhat superior specimen of the Mantalini genus; while his utter heartlessness, his meanness, and his ridiculous pretensions to

youth were rendered with consummate skill, and there was just a touch—a very slight one—of Mr. Micawber’s light-hearted optimism. The comedian was thoroughly at home in the part, and was clever and amusing from first to last. Mr. Cecil appeared with success in the rôle of Richard Blackburn in Mr. Brander Matthews’ comedy, *Margery’s Lovers*, produced at the Court Theatre on February 18th, 1884; and as *habitués* of the theatre could not spare such artists as Mrs. John Wood and Mr. Cecil from the programme entirely, during the run of *Dan’l Druce*, in 1884, a most amusing duologue, *My Milliner’s Bill*, written specially by Mr. Godfrey for these two clever comedians, was acted by them with unqualified success, Mr. Cecil’s impersonation of Mr. Merridew being quite one of his happiest efforts. Any thing more genuinely humorous than his alternations of mood could not be conceived, and the creation soon became one of the most popular of his many delightful character-studies. In June of the same year Mr. Cecil added one more type of whimsical humour to his *répertoire* in the part of Bodmin Todder, in Robertson’s

comedy, *Play*, also produced at the Court Theatre with success; and when *New Men and Old Acres* was revived at the Court on September 27th, 1884, Mr. Cecil, by his clever and polished method, was enabled to give distinction to the intrinsically insignificant part of Marmaduke Vavasour.

In that exquisite little domestic drama by Mr. Bronson Howard, *Young Mrs. Winthrop*, produced at the Court Theatre on November 6th, 1884, Mr. Cecil appeared as Buxton Scott, an amiable family solicitor of the pleasantly paternal type, and by quiet humour and elaboration of detail raised the comparatively unimportant rôle into significance. Mr. Cecil had only one real opportunity in the play, in a touching reconciliation scene between the young husband and wife who have drifted apart, but of this he made the most, and his delicate art contributed in no small degree to the perfection of a scene which in itself sufficed to render the play a success.

In *The Opal Ring*, Mr. G. W. Godfrey's adaptation of Octave Feuillet's comedietta, *Pévil en la Demeure*, which was placed in the evening

bill at the Court Theatre for the first time in February 1885, Mr. Cecil was entrusted with one of those rôles in which he is *facile princeps*, and as Lord Henry Toler, a consummate old *beau*, gave a minutely finished study, perfectly delightful in its humour and microscopic fidelity to nature. The character of Lord Henry Toler was the most effective in the drama, and Mr. Cecil was entirely admirable in the refinement and skill with which he made the creation live. The impersonation was more than clever, and there was no single detail of voice, gesture, or make-up appropriate to the character which had escaped shrewd perception and faithful reproduction by the actor.

As Lord William Whitehead in *The Denhams*, an adaptation of Emile Augier's *Les Fourchambaults*, which was produced at the Court Theatre on February 21st, Mr. Cecil was cast for a comparatively small part, and an unpleasant one to boot; but by his excellent art he contrived to invest the character of an unctuous, mercenary, and sneaking parson with a humour which at least redeemed the rôle from insignificance.

When the management of the Court Theatre reversed their policy of producing plays chiefly conspicuous for dulness and decorum by putting upon their stage, in March 1885, Mr. Pinero's extravagantly funny piece, *The Magistrate*, Mr. Cecil found an opportunity of creating an exceptionally humorous character in Mr. Posket, the hero of the title and the play.

As the bewildered, misguided magistrate, cursed with a precocious stepson of nineteen, who, represented by his mother as being only fourteen, kisses the maids, makes love to his music-teacher, initiates his highly-respectable stepfather into the mysteries of a card game known as "Fireworks," invests money on race-horses, keeps a room at the Hôtel des Princes, and conducts himself generally with a *savoir faire* that would more than do credit to his real age, Mr. Cecil was perfect. The dormant doubts which worry Mr. Posket, the growing misgivings, the qualms with which he permits himself to be beguiled into a little supper at the Hôtel des Princes, the appearance next morning at Mulberry Street on the magisterial

bench in a terrible condition of mud and sticking-plaster, the comical climax which comes in the shape of the committal of his own wife for seven days without the option of a fine,—all were simply admirable, the very quintessence of humour. The magistrate's struggles against the evil influence of his precocious step-son were inimitably conveyed, and Mr. Posket's description of being chased by the police was given with immense *verve* and humour. Mr. Cecil has created many noteworthy characters during his career, but Mr. Posket must always rank as one of the most irresistibly funny and completely successful.

In the extremely clever and unconventional comedy *The Schoolmistress*, by Mr. Pinero, produced at the Court Theatre on March 27th, 1886, Mr. Arthur Cecil had a comparatively small part, which he raised into importance by investing it with originality, and bringing out to the last degree the humour and whimsicality of the part. As the Hon. Vere Queckett, the husband of the schoolmistress, Mr. Cecil, by many subtle touches of quiet humour, painted a picture of an impecunious,

sponging aristocrat to the life. The character was far less to the front than Mr. Cecil's impersonation in *The Magistrate*, but with true artistic feeling he did not grudge his effort or his art upon the creation, with the result that Mr. Queckett became a strongly individualised study and a marked success.

On January 27th, 1887, Mr. Cecil created the drily humorous rôle of the hypocritical old butler, Blore, in Mr. Pinero's bright and extravagantly comical farce, *Dandy Dick*.

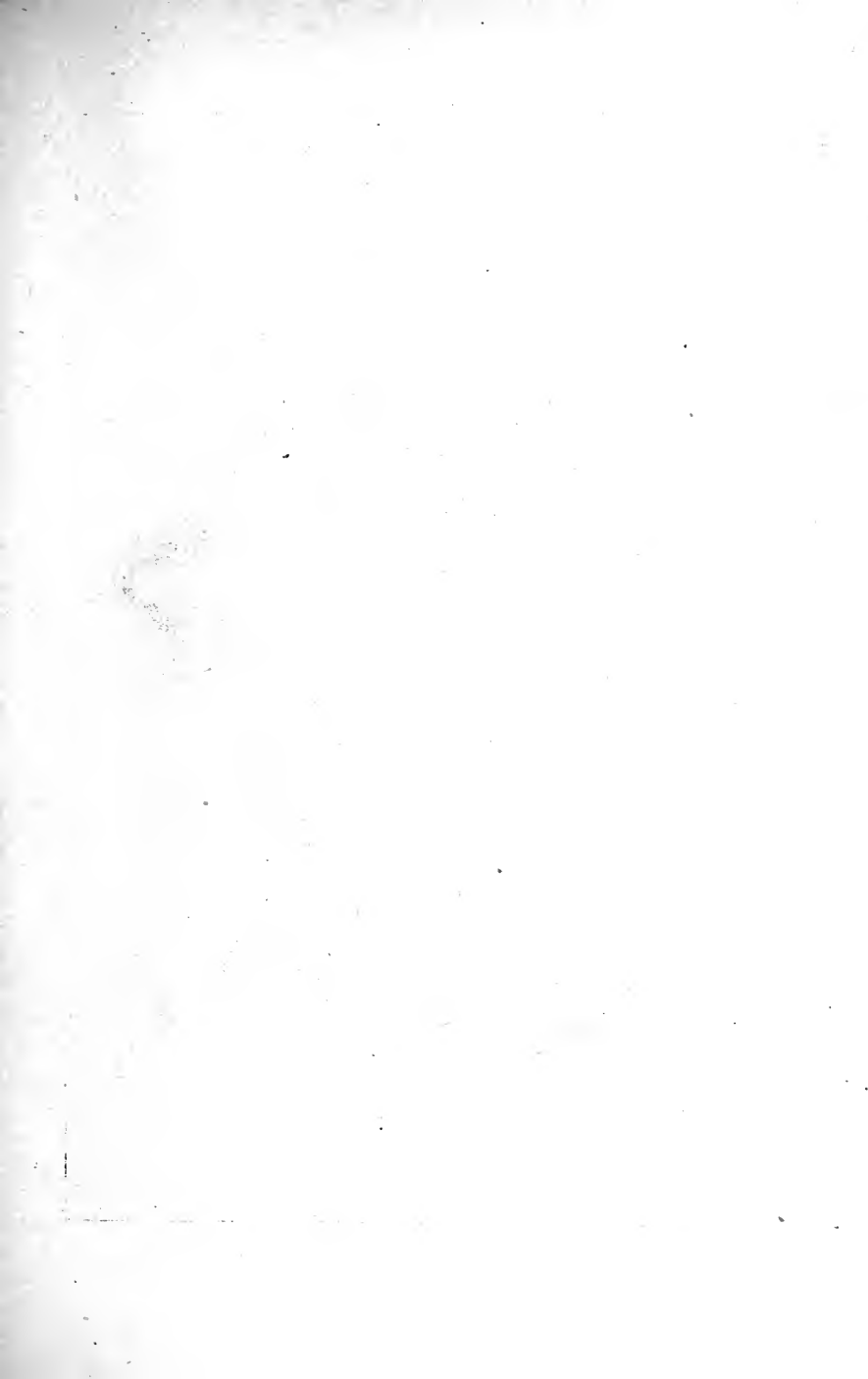
On July 22nd, 1887, the last performance in the old Court Theatre was given in the presence of a crowded and cordial audience, Mr. Cecil appearing in his well-known parts in the first acts of Mr. Pinero's three successful plays, *The Schoolmistress*, *Dandy Dick*, and *The Magistrate*. At the end of the performance, which was also the termination of the partnership of Messrs. John Clayton and Arthur Cecil, Mr. Clayton announced, amidst hearty applause, that Mr. Cecil would rejoin the company in the new Court Theatre, which stands now within a few yards of the site of the old building, and in which he has added to his dramatic successes.

When the new Court Theatre was opened on September 24th, 1888, with a new farcical comedy, *Mamma*, adapted by Mr. Sydney Grundy from *Les Surprises du Divorce*, Mr. Cecil rejoined the company in accordance with his announced intention, and revived many pleasant memories of his best style by his quietly effective and carefully elaborated rendering of the shrewd, hesitating Mr. Miles Henniker, and received a liberal share of the hearty welcome given to the favourites of the public; and when Mr. Ralph Lumley's clever play, *Aunt Jack*, was produced on July 18th, 1889, *habitués* of the Court were delighted to find that Mr. Cecil was provided with a character, in the person of S. Berkeley Brue, a susceptible, lady-killing barrister, which afforded him ample scope for the exercise of his whimsical humour, and rarely has he been seen to more advantage than in this well-conceived and irresistibly funny *rôle*.

But before this new production Mr. Cecil had, on February 28th, at St. George's Hall, and on March 7th, 1888, at the Haymarket, assisted at two *matinées* as Theodore Bramble,

the amusing hero of Mr. G. W. Godfrey's *The Man that Hesitates*, a version of Mrs. Hugh Bell's *L'Indecis*, which had served to introduce Miss Florence Wood, daughter of Mrs. John Wood, to the dramatic profession; and had created a whimsical Mr. Pickwick on February 7th, 1889, at certain *matinées* at the Comedy, at which Messrs. F. Burnand and Edward Solomon's amusing dramatic cantata, *Pickwick*, was given with much success.

Mr. Pinero's new play, *The Cabinet Minister*, was produced at the Court Theatre, on April 23rd, 1890, with immediate success, and once more Mr. Cecil was provided with an excellent part as Sir Peter Twombly, a statesman who is absolutely under the thumb of his wife; a character and condition from which Mr. Cecil extracted some entirely admirable comedy. On March 14th, 1891, Mrs. John Wood produced a new play, *The Volcano*, by Mr. Ralph Lumley, in which Mr. Cecil successfully created the character of the Duke of Donoway, an eccentric old nobleman who is the owner of a scurrilous society journal which lends its title to the play.





MR. THOMAS THORNE. FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. BONING & SMALL, 22, BAKER, ST., W.

Next please! Sophia!

Faithfully yours

Thomas Thorne.

THOMAS THORNE.

IN an age of long runs and "records" it is something to be able to boast of being amongst the makers and breakers of those apparently desirable objects, and Mr. Thorne may fairly claim to divide with Mr. David James, his quondam partner and twin comedian, the honour of breaking the record of theatrical "runs" of the period with his representation of Talbot Champneys in *Our Boys*, which helped to fill a page in the history of the London stage by running from its first production at the Vaudeville Theatre, on Saturday, January 16th, 1875, to Friday, April 18th, 1879, a phenomenal record unbroken to this day.

But apart from this "illusion of bigness," Mr. Thorne has made for himself a very distinct reputation as a comedian. He cannot be said

to have founded a school of acting, as his style has always been, and still remains, essentially his own ; but his individuality is very marked, and those who have followed his career with consistent attention know tolerably well what he is likely to make of any projected new creation.

Mr. Thorne is above all else English in his ideas of comedy. A stolid imperturbability, a slight denseness of perception, a nervous, diffident disposition, half-shrinking from contact with strangers, half manifesting that curious *brusquerie* behind which modesty is apt to hide its blushing face—all these essentially John-Bullish traits are indicated by Mr. Thorne with excellent art.

The average middle-class English audience is a little suspicious of genius. It has a nebulous, scarcely admitted, but firmly-rooted idea that brilliancy may be used to dazzle them in some undefined way to their detriment. It is just a little afraid of unconventionality, and harbours a vague distrust of individual ability beyond the common. An intellectual keenness inspires it with much the same nervous dread as would

the handling of edged tools ; and as there is no real enjoyment possible to sober and respectable householders and fathers of families without a concurrent sense of perfect security, they resign themselves with a comfortable sigh of complacency to the soothing influence of such art as that of Mr. Thorne, placidly content with the assurance that if at times there may be a suspicion of gentle dulness in their recreative entertainment it will at least be decorous. With the perversity of human nature, which ever loves to clap the fool's cap on any head but its own, playgoers delight to laugh at the clever impersonations of stupid people, of which Mr. Thorne has given many types to the stage ; and his own sense of humour has enabled the actor to accentuate the characteristics which he knows well enough will be recognised by half his audience as exactly illustrative of the idiosyncrasies of—the other half.

The ordinary playgoer loves a gentle joke of unimpeachable propriety, and finds a pleasant supply at the Vaudeville Theatre, where even the eighteenth-century coarseness of "Tom Jones," "Joseph Andrews," and "The Relapse"

has been deodorised by the Buchananisation of Fielding and Vanbrugh to the point of absolute propriety. Mr. Thorne knows his public *au fond*, and caters for it with most excellent discretion. For himself, and his personal contribution to their pleasure, none know better than he the artistic value of a judicious blend of pathos of the clerico-paternal school and dry, quaint humour such as passed for wit in the good old times, when all things, including brains, moved in more leisurely fashion than they do to-day. He recognises that man is in truth a "pendulum between a smile and a tear," and takes care not to put something wrong with the works by letting too violent an oscillation work upon the feelings of his audience. His artistic method represents the Consols of acting—the interest is never excessive, but the security is undeniable.

Yet there was a time when Mr. Thomas Thorne could ruffle it with the best and liveliest of the comedians of the metropolitan stage; and when he made his initial mark upon the stage of the Surrey Theatre on October 4th, 1862, his versatility was so indisputable that

he played "a number of characters" in a comic production called *Tom's Life*.

Not that this was Mr. Thorne's "first appearance on any stage." That took place at Warrington in 1857 when he was but sixteen years old; and he has good reason to remember it, by reason of the stage fright, which even now has hardly left him upon first performances.

The youthful aspirant had only one line to speak. The play was *Othello*, and the line in question was "'Tis our Iago, ancient to the General!" After careful study, when the night came, the nervous *débutant* stammered out, "'Tis our Iago, ancient to his Majesty!"

After this promising start came four years' provincial experience, and Mr. Thorne's first London appearance was to have been at the Standard Theatre on the night of the Prince Consort's death, in consequence of which the theatre was closed, and the *début* necessarily postponed. So eventually, instead of appearing at the Standard as the Miller in *Giralda; or, The Invisible Husband*, Mr. Thorne's first appearance before a London audience was at the Surrey in the following year.

Then followed a spell of admirable acting in burlesque upon the boards of the Strand Theatre, then at its brightest; and during his connection with that company, extending from 1864 until 1870, Mr. Thorne was entrusted with many leading parts in rollicking farce, extravagant burlesque, and solid drama, and proved his worth by speedily winning and retaining the goodwill of the public. As a dancer of break-downs, in feminine guise, he was admirable—head and heels alike ministering to the amusement of his audience.

It was in 1870 that Mr. Thorne, in conjunction with Mr. David James and the late Harry Montague, entered upon what was to prove the most important and epoch-making enterprise of his career—the management of the Vaudeville Theatre, where for twenty years past he has loyally given playgoers of his best, and they have as loyally supported him.

Opening the new house with Andrew Halliday's *For Love or Money*, and a burlesque, *Don Carlos; or, The Infante in Arms*, he made a good impression at once in his dual capacity. On June 4th he gained new honours as an actor

by his careful and affecting impersonation of poor blind Caleb Deecie in Albery's *Two Roses*, and in the following year clinched his success by displaying admirable and unforced humour in the part of the Great Baggs in Albery's comedy, *Apple Blossoms*. In the two following years Mr. Thorne showed peculiar aptitude for the humours of old comedy character in the entirely excellent revivals of *The School for Scandal* and *The Road to Ruin*, in the former of which he impersonated Crabtree in able fashion during the long run of four hundred and twelve nights which the revival enjoyed; and on April 1st, 1874, Mr. Thorne created the part of Barnabas Smith in Albery's comedy, *Pride*.

All these impersonations and varied experiences led to the creation, on January 16th, 1875, of the part of Talbot Champneys, the good-natured, rather simple-minded, but loyal and manly son of Sir Talbot Champneys, and one of *Our Boys*. Mr. Thorne's quiet, deliberate method suited the character of the rather slow-witted youth to perfection, and while leaving, perhaps, something to be desired

in the detail of suggesting the *savoir faire* of the son of a man accustomed to good society, and pluming himself upon his patrician origin and attributes, there was so much humanity in Mr. Thorne's impersonation, and, when the moment came, so thoroughly manly a spirit, that it proved very acceptable, and was of considerable value in starting upon the high road to success a play destined to enjoy a quite unprecedented run upon its first production, and to be revived again and again in after years, affording wholesome amusement, and winning honest sympathy from a second generation of playgoers.

Mr. Thorne's naturally keen sense of humour was amusingly evident when he was once taking a holiday in the neighbourhood of Falmouth with Mr. Henry A. Jones. The actor and author chanced upon a country fair, and in a holiday humour indulged in some "shies" at a head which, if skilfully hit, yielded a cigar in return for the sportsman's penny. The quality can be imagined!

Mr. Jones won some five or six, and Mr. Thorne half as many again. Then came the

question what to do with them. To smoke them was impossible, but knowing the strength of the rustic stomach for gratuitous luxuries, Mr. Jones gave his to the smallest smoker he could find in the fair, while Mr. Thorne presented his to a comely lass at a shooting gallery, who accepted them gratefully with the remark, "They'll do for father"—an aged person who divided with her the responsibility of the Wimbledon on wheels.

On the next day the two friends were driving past the gallery, and noticed that the girl was on guard alone. With one of his quaint smiles Mr. Thorne turned to his companion and remarked drily, "Ah, they've done for father!"

Mr. Thorne's predilection for the stage runs in the blood. He comes of a theatrical family, and his interesting, old-fashioned house in St. John's Wood Road, where, upon high days at the adjacent "Lord's," the comedian pays the penalty of propinquity to the popular cricket-ground by dispensing pleasant hospitality to his many friends, is full of valuable pictures of stage celebrities of nearly two hundred years,

including quite a Liston gallery, showing the great comedian as Paul Pry, Billy Lackaday, Moll Flagon, Sam Swipes, Simon Pengander, Lubin Log, and Van Dunder, illustrating in marked fashion the quiet drollery of the famous player of whom Elia said there is "one face of Farley, one face of Knight, one (but what a one it is!) of Liston."

In the pretty dining-room, softly lighted in an artistic way by windows in which Shakespearean figures fill the quaint old leaded panes, the portrait of Edward Knight, the comedian, whose odd rapidity of gesture made him so interesting a study in his day, by John Prescott Knight, R.A., hangs hard by that of John Poole, the author of *Paul Pry*, by H. W. Pickersgill, R.A., and a peculiarly interesting "David Garrick and Mrs. Cibber in *Venice Preserved*," by Zoffany, bought at Mrs. Garrick's sale in 1823. Here, too, is Zoffany's painting of Foote, whose wonderful mimicry made him many enemies, and nearly brought him into collision with Garrick, whose Shakespearean celebration at Drury Lane he intended to caricature, but was dis-

suaded from doing so, or Garrick's grandiose couplet,—

“A nation's taste depends on you;
Perhaps a nation's virtues, too,”

would have been capped by a mimic flapping of the arms like wings, and the ejaculation, “Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

Other interesting pictures in Mr. Thorne's collection are John Partridge's portrait of Samuel Rogers; Opie's beautiful portrait of Sarah Siddons; Thomas Phillips's “Charles Kemble as Tamerlane;” Zoffany's “King as Lord Ogleby,” and “Macklin as Sir Gilbert Wrough;” “Miss Foote as Roxana;” John Hoppner's “Mrs. Jordan;” “Madame Vestris,” by Sir Thomas Lawrence, and “Nell Gwynne as Diana,” by Maria Verelst.

Even in the hall the “professional” keynote is struck, for on every side hang portraits and caricatures of all sorts of well-known actors. Pelligrini's caricature of Salvini, and Alfred Bryan's quaint and clever sketch of the one-thousandth night of *Our Boys*; characteristic portraits of Buckstone, Toole, Mr. Irving as

Louis XI., Mr. David James as Perkyn Middlewick, Charles Mathews, Belmore, Henry Neville, the late E. L. Blanchard, Sheridan, after Sir Joshua's portrait, land the visitor at once in an artistic atmosphere, which pervades the whole place, and gives it a charm of its own; and in the actor's "snuggery," jostled by lawn-tennis bats, alpenstocks—for Mr. Thorne is a famous tourist—MS. plays, and personal waifs and strays, are such interesting souvenirs as the playbill of the opening night of the Vaudeville Theatre on April 16th, 1871, when, among other clever actors, Mr. Irving appeared in the *rôle* of Alfred Skimmington; an engraving of the farewell benefit of Grimaldi, representing the famous clown singing "All the World's in Paris," and a set of volumes of Lavater's Physiognomy, from which Mr. Thorne is not ashamed to admit he has taken many valuable hints upon the all-important subject of "making-up."

In this pretty, old-world home, with his daughter and his dogs, his pictures, tennis, and comrades, the comedian spends his leisure time, and in an unaffected, cordial way wins regard

from his friends, who like nothing better than a chat with a man who can tell a good story off the stage with all the quiet humour by which he has won favour as an actor.

On Saturday, April 19th, 1879, *Our Boys* was succeeded by a companion comedy by Mr. Albery called *Our Girls*, with Mr. Thorne in a prominent part as Tony Judson; but the new piece failed to create the sensation of its abnormally successful prototype, and on September 24th gave place to a revival of *Two Roses*, with Mr. Thorne in his original rôle of Caleb Deecie.

The year 1880 was not a very satisfactory one at the Vaudeville. The enormous success of *Our Boys* was not to be repeated or approached yet awhile. On January 29th Mr. Thorne appeared as Albany Thorpe in Mr. Burnand's comedy, *Ourselves*; in the following month he revived *The School for Scandal*, resuming his old part of Crabtree; and on March 27th a new play, *Cobwebs*, by Mr. Wills, was put upon the boards, but without success. April 10th saw Mr. Thorne as Mr. Henry Dove in a revival of *Married Life*, which

proved more popular ; but on May 29th this was succeeded by a new comedy by Mr. Albery, called *Jacks and Jills*, in which Mr. Thorne appeared as Pawle, doing the best he could with a poor and incredible part. But again the tide of success refused to float the Vaudeville on the sea of popularity, and the first night was the occasion of a remarkable scene, which arose from certain demonstrations of disapproval upon the part of some of the audience, which Mr. Albery ventured to attribute to organised opposition in preference to frankly accepting the adverse verdict.

At last the tide turned, and on June 28th, 1880, success once more gladdened the actor-manager of the Vaudeville, induced by Mr. E. G. Lankester's new farcical comedy, *The Gov'nor*, which amused the public mightily, and was cordially accepted by them in condonation of various dull and uninteresting productions. As Freddy Butterscotch, the stammering son of a retired sweetstuff maker, Mr. Thorne was really clever. His nervous bewilderment and hesitating speech were admirably assumed, and the barrister son of the rough old tradesman

became in his hands an extremely amusing personage. Mr. Thorne is invariably at his best in the portrayal of comic nervousness and the agonies of a bashful man, and in this new creation he won fresh favour, and contributed heavily to the success of the play.

On January 29th, 1881, Mr. Robert Reece's adaptation of *Le Papa de l'Avocat* was produced at the Vaudeville under the name of *Divorce*, Mr. Thorne creating the part of Samuel Buckingham, a retired manufacturer; but despite the very Parisian name of the theatre, the adaptation of the French farce did not seem at home upon a stage identified so largely with a class of wholesome English humour, which, if it lacked Gallic wit, was also free from its more objectionable features; and on March 10th Mr. Thorne appeared as Tom Pinch in Messrs. Joseph Dilley and Lewis Clifton's comedy of that name, investing the character with admirable humour and pathos, conceived in the true spirit of Dickens, and carried out with artistic completeness.

Both humour and pathos were again discernible in Mr. Thorne's creation of John Hope

in Mr. Sims's comedy *The Half-way House*, produced on October 1st, in which character the player realised the humorous as well as the tender phase of the character of a rich florist, with a daughter to whom he is devoted, but who, in his stern sense of right, he feels constrained to turn from home.

On November 28th Mr. Thorne appeared as Peter Popcorn in a little one-act vaudeville by "Delacour Daubigny," called *That Girl He left Behind Him*; and during 1882 he appeared successfully as Graves in *Money*, his solemn dance with Lady Franklin being extremely comical; Mark Meddle, in *London Assurance*, an excellent performance, full of quiet humour, and admirably free from the extravagance and vulgarity sometimes associated with the part; and Bob Acres, a bit of legitimate comedy in Mr. Thorne's best style, rich in quiet humour, indicated rather than expressed in a thoroughly artistic fashion.

It is always just an atom risky to bring religion and religious opinions prominently upon the stage; but in Mr. Henry Arthur Jones's admirable play *Saints and Sinners*, produced



MR. T. THORNE AS JACOB FLETCHER IN "SAINTS
AND SINNERS."



at the Vaudeville on September 25th, 1884, although the principal characters were closely identified with Nonconformity, there was nothing at which even a pastor of "Little Bethel" could reasonably cavil, and it afforded Mr. Thorne an opportunity of creating an excellent stage-figure in the old minister, Jacob Fletcher. Dissent *per se* was not held up to ridicule, but canting hypocrisy was well whipped; while the pastor himself, a simple-minded, God-fearing, lovable old man, proved not only a delightful study, but an incarnate homily free from homiletic prosiness. In *Saints and Sinners* two contrasting aspects of religion were presented: that in which it figures as the ennobling and beautifying element of life, and that in which it is used as a cloak for utter worldliness of the meanest type; and this atmosphere environed a central *motif* as old as humanity itself—woman's weakness, suffering, and restoration, a subject of inexhaustible interest, infinite as love, and anguish, and pity.

Mr. Thorne was seen to considerable advantage as the child-like, tender-hearted, devoted old minister. His pathos, which might so easily

have erred upon the side of feeble sentimentality, and grown prosy and tiresome, was never overdone, and in some of the scenes he displayed a quiet dignity which was in excellent contrast to his gentler moods. The pale, worn face, the trembling hands, the broken voice of the old man torn between conflicting emotions and divided duty as regards his ministry and his erring daughter, were full of pathos, and Jacob Fletcher remains a clearly defined memory of one of Mr. Thorne's most acceptable impersonations.

Belonging to the same broadly humorous school of production as *Nita's First* and *Confusion*, Mr. J. P. Hurst's farcical comedy, *Loose Tiles*, produced at the Vaudeville Theatre on January 28th, 1885, at a trial *matinée*, was an instant success, and provided Mr. Thorne with a part which gave him a host of opportunities for displaying the peculiar humour in which he is seen at his best. As the nervous, bashful Bob Twitters, who, by mistaking the perfectly sane residents in a highly-respectable boarding-house for the inmates of a private lunatic asylum, and "humouring" them to their

utmost bewilderment, Mr. Thorne was quite at home, and his jerky gestures and artistic rendering of the mental distress of a bashful man were full of significance, and proved highly entertaining. The incessant and uniformly unsuccessful attempts of the unhappy Twitters to escape from the house, his stammering admission that he is a hair-dresser, in order to humour one of the lady-boarders, and his subsequent terror at finding himself involved in the awful responsibility of doing the lady's hair in the latest fashion, were excellently acted, and Mr. Thorne scored heavily in a part which might easily have degenerated into caricature.

Theatrical audiences will submit to a good deal, but there is one thing which they invariably resent—being bored. They will chuckle over doubtful *doubles entendres*; roar with delight at pantomimic rough-and-tumble horse-play; shudder at material or moral earthquakes; and weep maudlin tears over the wrongs of pale and interesting heroines in black cloaks with peculiarly becoming hoods. But they will not tolerate four acts of tame dialogue, tedious platitude, commonplace incident, and forced

humour, even though relieved at lengthy intervals by really clever repartee. Hence Dr. Westland Marston's play, *Under Fire*, produced at the Vaudeville on April 1st, 1885, failed to win popularity. The hero, Guy Morton, a bluff, outspoken, sheepish young squire, was carefully played by Mr. Thorne in the style which has become identified with his representation of this class of character; but the *rôle* was not a very notable one at best, and gave the actor very few opportunities of making anything of it.

As Jack Alabaster, in Byron's clever farcical comedy, *Open House*, produced, virtually for the first time, at the Vaudeville on April 15th, 1885, Mr. Thorne was deliciously droll in the dry, unconscious way which suits both himself and the Byronic school of humour so well, and, bristling at all points with good things as the part was, the actor did not permit one of them to pass unappreciated to the uttermost. Jack Alabaster was a really humorous creation, and fitted Mr. Thorne to a nicety, contributing largely to the success of a play in which the fun was so bright and airy, the repartee so

ready, keen, and witty, the word-playing so ingenious and audacious, that it was painful to remember that the bright and happy piece of work was written at a time when the author was worn and weary with an illness which was to prove fatal only too soon, and rob the stage of a writer whom it could ill spare.

On January 13th, 1886, Mr. Thorne appeared as the Hon. Danby Cleeve in Mr. Joseph Derrick's farcical comedy



MR. T. THORNE, AS JACK ALABASTER IN
"OPEN HOUSE."

Peebeians, but the part was not well within the actor's range, and he was not seen to advantage in it.

Then came an impersonation of Montague Doo in *Doo, Brown, & Co.*, by Mr. C. M. Rae, produced at the Vaudeville on March 11th; and on April 12th Mr. Thorne made one more notable success in his first venture into dramatic versions of Fielding, a bold experiment destined to prove exceptionally popular.

An adaptation of Fielding might at the first blush have seemed almost as risky as that bogey of Mrs. Grundy "an adaptation from the French." The harum-scarum vagaries of Tom Jones, and the eccentricities—to put it charitably—of dashing Lady Bellaston, might well have been deemed doubtful dramatic *pabulum* for Mr. Gilbert's "young lady of fifteen" and Mr. Podsnap's "young person;" and it was not without some doubt of the result that playgoers anticipated the production of Mr. Robert Buchanan's discreetly Bowdlerised adaptation of the famous story, under the title of *Sophia*, at the Vaudeville Theatre, on April 12th, 1886.

But success followed the production, because the play was based upon passions perennially existent, independently of dates and adventitious

circumstances. So long as sleek hypocrites worm their way by moral fraud into the good graces of benevolent but wooden-headed patrons; so long as hearty, manly folly, free from vice, brings misfortune, but with misfortune sympathy, to headstrong lads such as Englishmen love; so long as beauty in distress has power to win tears, and faithful service admiration,—so long will such plays as *Sophia* strike a chord of sympathy in the hearts of playgoers.

And the play was notable for providing Mr. Thomas Thorne with a part which was peculiarly well suited to his dry, sententious style of humour; and as Partridge, the faithful and classics-quoting barber, he gave the public a clever creation, the humour and the pathos being modulated with careful art, and the whole impersonation conspicuously human and convincingly true. Mr. Thorne's unctuousness of tone in this rôle was very effective, and his quiet by-play, unobtrusive pathos, and faithfully rendered *minutiæ* of "business" from first to last were excellent examples of careful acting, and combined to make Partridge immensely

popular and a memorable figure in a notable play.

In July of this year Mr. Thorne gave a highly finished study of the crafty, timorous usurer, Silky, in a revival of *The Road to Ruin*, every tone and gesture adding its quota to the building up of a thoroughly artistic representation of the part, full of realism and faithful reproduction of human nature of its own unpleasant kind

In Mr. Henry A. Jones's domestic drama *Heart of Hearts*, produced at the Vaudeville on November 3rd, 1887, at a *matinée*, and put into the evening bill a week later, Mr. Thorne had an excellent part as James Robins, a self-respecting, stubborn, good-hearted old butler, with a pretty niece whom he loves with all his strength, and who is suspected and accused of stealing a bracelet, set with a superb ruby, which gives the play its title. The possibilities of alternate comedy and tenderness of such a part, involving a double duty and a dual struggle of sentiment, were quickly recognised by Mr. Thorne; but although there were moments when James Robins, secretly married

to one of his mistresses, humorous as he was, seemed an impossible person, he certainly got an immense amount of fun out of the equivocal situations in which he was placed, while his fiery defence of his wrongly-accused niece was full of manly indignation. James Robins suited Mr. Thorne's method and style to perfection, and his quiet, quaint vein of humour and blunt exhibitions of John-Bullish honesty, have rarely had a fairer field for their development. The actor obviously felt this, and amongst all his creations James Robins stands out as quite one of the most amusing.

On January 19th, 1888, Mr. Thorne appeared with some success as the Rev. Mr. Colley, a mild curate, in *Fascination*, a comedy by Mr. Robert Buchanan and Miss Harriet Jay; and on March 8th, after a *matinée* trial trip on the previous day, he produced with immediate and unqualified success Mr. Buchanan's version of Fielding's novel, "Joseph Andrews," under the title of *Joseph's Sweetheart*, himself creating the rôle of Parson Adams, his adequate realisation of which was a foregone conclusion.

There is something in the very spirit of the

age in which Parson Adams moved which seems sympathetic to Mr. Thorne's acting method. He had already, in old comedy revivals, proved his power of taking part in the class of play which paints "Life *à la mode* a hundred years ago;" and the sturdy, simple piety of the honest parson, his pleasant little humanising touch of vanity, his gentle manliness, his perfect charity, his rugged honesty of purpose and childlike faith, were represented with just the unaffected, unapparent art which alone could make the figure live in the artificial atmosphere behind the footlights. Fielding's lovable creation, the true

"Parson Adams, type of honest worth,
Born of the pure embrace of Love and Mirth,
Smiled in the English sunshine, proving clear
That one true heart is worth a world's veneer!"

Mr Thorne was peculiarly successful in conveying this feeling of the honesty and trustworthiness of the single-minded old parson, with his sturdy, bull-dog faith in the stout oak cudgel which he carried with him into such strange company, and the beautiful peaceful-



MR. THOMAS THORNE AS "PARSON ADAMS."



ness of his simple home-life far away from the bewildering haunts of men ; and his impersonation of the part was not only an artistic piece of work, but a notable addition to the lovable, honest, thoroughly English type of character so justly beloved of the British public.

In 1889 Mr. Thorne produced, on January 17th, after his usual *matinée* trial trip three days before, Mr. Robert Buchanan's fantastic comedy *Dr. Cupid*, in which he created the title *rôle*, and invested it with some humour, although it was by no means of the class in which he is seen at his best. On May 9th he appeared as Mr. Alfred Gadabout in a comedy called *Angelina*, adapted by Mr. W. Cooper from M. Bisson's *Une Mission Delicate*, produced at a Vaudeville *matinée*; and on June 19th he created the part of Mr. Septimus Porter in Mr. Buchanan's comedy-drama, *The Old Home*.

On February 6th, 1890, Mr. Thorne produced with immediate success Mr. Buchanan's dramatised version of "Clarissa Harlowe," under the title of *Clarissa*, himself sustaining the difficult *rôle* of the reformed rake, Belford.

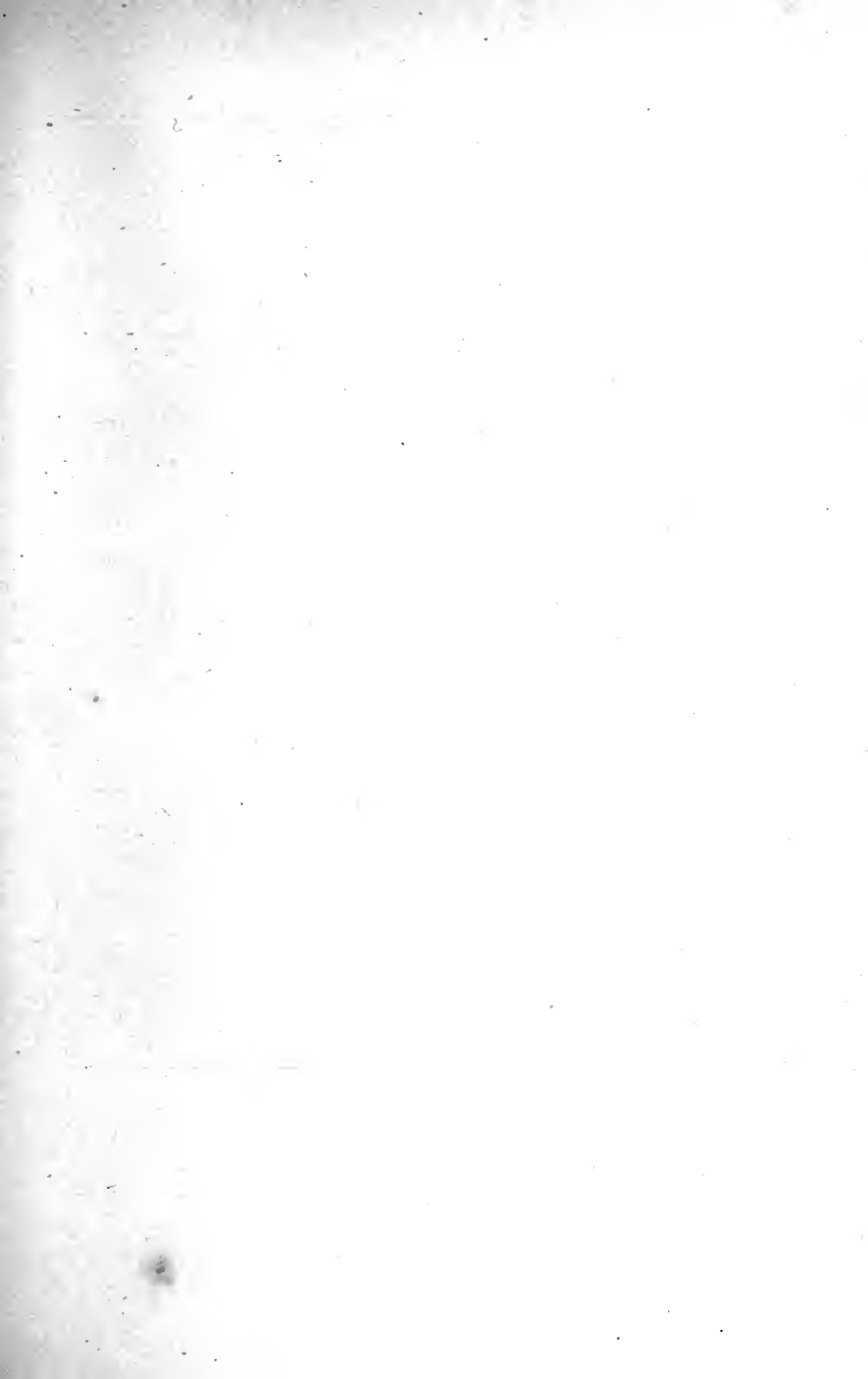
The play proved extremely popular, and even those who were not familiar with Richardson's classic story of woman's credulity and man's vice found in the drama a thoroughly interesting study of human nature; while those who knew the book gladly recognised the fact that Mr. Buchanan had preserved a good deal of the Richardsonian *bouquet* in dialogue and situation. As Belford Mr. Thorne had a part that was not conspicuously adapted to his style of acting; but by throwing more than his customary vigour and earnestness of purpose into his impersonation he rendered it an acceptable figure in a distinctly successful production.

Mr. Thorne appeared to the apparent satisfaction of his audiences as Lord Foppington in *Miss Tomboy*, an adaptation by Mr. Buchanan, after Sheridan, of Vanbrugh's old comedy, *The Relapse*, produced on March 20th. The character is one not suited to Mr. Thorne's method, and although he acted it with his customary carefulness and conscientious regard for details, it could not be ranked amongst his most successful impersonations.

Subsequently Mr. Thorne revived *She Stoops*

to Conquer, impersonating Tony Lumpkin with all his old gusto; and after a long provincial tour he re-opened the Vaudeville, after the theatre had undergone much constructional alteration and improvement, on January 13th, 1891, with *Woodbarrow Farm*, a bright, breezy comedy by Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, in which Mr. Thorne was admirably suited with the part of one Piffin, a most amusingly bumptious butler, who coaches his young master in the social conventions.







FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. WINDOW & GROVE, 63A, BAKER STREET, W.

William Ross

"
There are few people we find
it so hard to forgive as those
we have injured
"Ravenswood"

WILLIAM TERRISS.

THE short spell of seafaring life which Mr. Terriss went through in the Royal Navy when a lad seems to have set its mark upon him, and has probably had its share in bringing about the extreme popularity which he has so long enjoyed. English people dearly love a sailor. There is something in the very name that conjures up an ideally brave and honest fellow. Tradition may now and then be falsified by facts, and the conventional conceptions of the British tar prove somewhat of a fallacy, but the instinctive notion of these sons of the sea is of sturdy, brusque, manly fellows, and with a quite remarkable unanimity the prevailing sentiment in every class is that "they all love Jack."

Whether or no this is recognised even by those who feel it most, the fact remains that any savour of the sea appeals at once to the sympathies of the British public, and both on and off the stage there is a frank, sturdy, impulsive *bonhomie* about Mr. Terriss which is essentially sailor-like and pleasant.

If there is such a thing as a national sentiment with our stolid people, it is indisputably and inseparably associated with the sea, and Mr. Terriss, of all players of the period, is the most satisfying and obvious embodiment of this sentiment. As he bounds upon the stage in one of his bright and breezy naval characters he reminds one of the hero of the quaint old ballad, popular early in the century—

“Young William looked so manly, drest all in his sailor’s clothes,
His cheeks they were like roses, his eyes as black as sloes;”

and it is not difficult to picture his tender-hearted admirers, if he were to go touring in the Antipodes, for example, joining in the melancholy chorus—

“But he is gone afar,
And my heart lies in the bosom of my jolly roving tar.”

An excellent actor, hardworking, conscientious, "thorough" in everything he undertakes, and artistic alike in his conception and rendition of a character, Mr. Terriss has well won the prominent position in the dramatic world which he occupies, and his popularity is both well-deserved and intelligible. During the twenty years or so which he has spent upon the stage he has appeared in a sufficient variety of *rôles* to please playgoers of every taste, while through them all there has been perceptible the same strong dominant note of manly pluck and romantic chivalry which satisfy at once the heart and imagination of an English audience.

From that notable day in 1868, when, as Mr. Bancroft tells, the youthful aspirant to the stage called upon Mrs. Bancroft and himself so persistently in their house in St. John's Wood, and announced with characteristic frankness, as he pointed to the window of an opposite house, "That's the room I was born in," and added that he wanted to go upon the stage and was "resolved that they should give him an engagement," Mr. Terriss has laboured loyally and indefatigably at his profession, with one or two

brief experimental spells of other work in the early years of his career, with a result only attainable by "the genius which is another name for hard work."

After some two years' experience in Birmingham, and with the Bancroft company at the Prince of Wales's, Mr. Terriss joined the Drury Lane company, appearing in Andrew Halliday's drama *Rebecca*, and as Malcolm Graeme in *The Lady of the Lake*. Then came a migration to the Strand Theatre, where for two hundred and fifty representations he enacted the important rôle of Doricourt in *The Belle's Stratagem* with grace and refinement, returning to Drury Lane subsequently, well established in public favour, appearing there as Sir Kenneth in *Richard Cœur de Lion*, Romeo to Miss Wallis's Juliet, and Captain Molyneux in *The Shaughraun*, by Boucicault, retaining his place in the cast upon the removal of that play to the Adelphi.

Then followed a number of artistic and successful appearances at the Adelphi and Princess's Theatres, and the creation of the character of Julian Peveril in Mr. W. G. Wills's

drama *England* at Drury Lane ; and on March 30th, 1878, he created the part of Squire Thornhill upon the production of Mr. Wills's *Olivia*, and confirmed the high opinion which playgoers had already begun to form of his talent.

One of the most pronounced successes of this period of Mr. Terriss's career was the impersonation of the villain, Sidney Sefton, in Byron's comedy *Conscience Money*, produced at the Haymarket on September 16th, 1878, in which he showed an individuality of style that was quickly recognised by the critics ; and on October 3rd, in the same year, he made a further favourable impression as Captain Absolute in *The Rivals*. When James Albery's comedy *The Crisis* was produced at the Haymarket on December 2nd he impersonated Fawley Denham ; on April 4th, 1879, he created the rôle of Walter North in Mr. Wills's drama *Ellen*, and on June 12th he displayed a genuine spirit of comedy as Hugh Merryman in Mr. Wills's *Brag*.

Upon his migration to the St. James's Theatre Mr. Terriss appeared on October 4th, 1879

as Count de la Roque in Mr. Val Prinsep's comediotta, *M. le Duc*, as well as taking up the rôle of Jack Gambier in *The Queen's Shilling*, proving very acceptable in both parts, and in the former especially bearing himself with a courtly grace that was full of charm, and added in no inconsiderable degree to the picturesque of the production.

After the long run of *The Queen's Shilling*, Tom Taylor's comedy *Still Waters Run Deep* was revived in excellent fashion at the St. James's on March 13th, 1880, Mr. Terriss making a very bright and agreeable Captain Hawksley; and on September 18th he was associated with Mr. Irving in the revival of *The Corsican Brothers* at the Lyceum, sustaining the part of M. de Château Renaud with marked success.

Upon the production of *The Cup* at the Lyceum, on January 3rd, 1881, Mr. Terriss created the part of Sinnatus, and made all that could be made out of a rather sketchy character, which only flits in a shadowy fashion through a few scenes; and, after appearing successfully as Flutter in a revival of *The Belle's Stratagem*

on April 16th, in May, with Mr. Irving and Mr. Booth, he gave a representation of Cassio, which was thoroughly original and artistic, and worthy of the Moor of the one great actor and the Iago of the other. Mr. Terriss gave playgoers a Cassio which was virtually a new creation. Instead of accentuating the more commonplace side of the character, exaggerating the drunkenness, and blotting all dignity out of the part, Mr. Terriss represented Cassio as an officer not unworthy of the confidence and friendship of the Moor; and his gallant bearing, picturesque appearance, and thoroughly artistic conception of the character made it not the least notable impersonation even in a remarkable and distinguished cast.

When Albery's *Two Roses* was revived at the Lyceum on Boxing Day 1881, Mr. Terriss took H. J. Montague's old part, Jack Wyatt, and made a fine, manly, sympathetic figure of the young lover, acting with great naturalness and charm.

Mr. Terriss's Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, revived on March 8th, 1882, was notable and convincing, and his Don Pedro, in the Lyceum

revival of *Much Ado About Nothing*, on October 11th, 1882, was thoroughly Shakespearean and well thought out.

When Miss Mary Anderson re-opened the Lyceum on the night of Saturday, September 6th, 1884, with *Pygmalion and Galatea*, Mr. Terriss was the new Pygmalion, and proved all that the most *exigéant* playgoer could demand. A handsome, graceful personality, the new Pygmalion was instinct with refinement, and not lacking in strength. Mr. Terriss's by-play was excellent, and in the more pathetic scenes he was tender and sympathetic. When it is said that he proved an acceptable and worthy companion picture to that of Miss Anderson's Galatea his impersonation cannot be more highly praised.

Upon the same occasion Mr. Terriss appeared as d'Aulnay in *Comedy and Tragedy*, Mr. Gilbert's charming little play, and acted with art and passion, impetuous and dignified in his scene with the *roué* Duc d'Orléans, and tender and loving with Clarice—a notable and picturesque impersonation.

When, on November 1st, 1884, he appeared as Romeo to the Juliet of Miss Mary Anderson

he was unanimously voted not only one of the most satisfactory, but one of the most daring and original modern exponents of the part. His love-making was passionate, his despair realistic, and the impersonation from beginning to end both interesting and masterly. It was somewhat unequal, and perhaps a little too self-conscious, but none the less there were great moments in it. Mr. Terriss made an ideally handsome, manly, and gallant lover, but the illusion would have been more complete had he indulged less in posing picturesquely, although perhaps this was a pardonable weakness in so personable a representative of the part. Still, it occasionally compelled the reflection that it would have been a more perfect piece of art had there been a little less Terriss and a little more Romeo in it. Even in his most passion-torn moments the actor rarely quite forgot that he was behind the footlights. It was only in the fury of his anger, as when he slew Tybalt, that he succeeded entirely in effacing himself, and Romeo became great. But the impersonation, judged as a whole, was peculiarly pleasing—refined, graceful, sometimes powerful,

and altogether one of the best Romeos of the period. Mr. Terriss looked superb in his handsome costumes, and was always gallant and manly ; but it was in the later scenes that he gave the audience a glimpse of his highest qualities as an actor. The onslaughts upon Tybalt and upon Paris were brilliant, and positively terrific in their fury, and the intense despair of Romeo's soliloquy in the tomb of Juliet was rendered with most excellent art.

Upon the night of Mr. Irving's farewell, July 28th, 1883, Mr. Terriss appeared again as Flutter, and also as Richard Houseman in *Eugene Aram*. In the elaborate revival of *Twelfth Night*, at the Lyceum, on July 8th, 1884, Mr. Terriss had little to do in his impersonation of the Duke Orsino but strut about in magnificent clothes and look dignified. This he did to perfection, and further proved himself fairly equal to the graver demands upon his ability which now and again occurred.

When Miss Mary Anderson revived *The Hunchback* at the Lyceum Theatre on February 24th, 1885, for the purpose of appearing as

Julia in that clever but rather antiquated play, Mr. Terriss enacted the part of Sir Thomas Clifford with success. The readiness with which Sir Thomas Clifford takes his ladylove's flightiness *au grand sérieux* is always one of the weak points of the play, and is at the bottom of the secret why it is so lacking in power over the hearts of an audience, who do not care to waste emotion upon a tempest in a teacup; and in the interview with Julia, after Sir Thomas Clifford has lost his title and estates, and become the secretary of her affianced husband, the Earl of Rochdale, Mr. Terriss displayed a curious immobility. Occasionally he was excellent, showing grace and pathos, but, as a whole, Sir Thomas Clifford did not rank amongst his best impersonations.

As Armand in *Camille*, produced at a *matinée* at the Prince's Theatre on April 21st, 1885, Mr. Terriss was manly, earnest, thorough, and gave his audience a piece of acting up to his usual excellent standard. He was a little rough at times, showing a quite unnecessary *brusquerie* to the bearer of the letter, and

the man's equally discourteous tone elicited an irrepressible laugh. But, on the whole, the impersonation was creditable, and something more.

A handsome sailor lad, buffeting bravely against the storms of Fate, and at last triumphantly tossed into the arms of Love and Beauty by the very waves which he has breasted, is not only a sight to gladden all who love to see pluck and constancy rewarded, but is also the surest and straightest road to the heart of a British audience. There yet lingers deep down in the national nature so much sympathy with the storm and stress of a seafarer's life, and such an honest admiration of the frank and jovial qualities of the British tar, that it was small wonder that Messrs. Sims and Pettitt's breezy play, *The Harbour Lights*, produced at the Adelphi Theatre on December 26th, 1885, was a complete success. It was a wholesome piece of work, teaching a sound lesson of courage, honour, constancy, hope, faith, and all that makes true men and women, calling into activity generous sympathies and humane instincts which in the

stern business of life may have lapsed into a torpor.

As the hero, David Kingsley, Mr. Terriss had a part entirely after his own heart. He did not act, he *was* the handsome, frank sailor, whose joyous laugh, bright eyes, and sturdy, ringing voice brought life and hope into the darkest hour. The fine presence, boyishly handsome face, and free, fearless gestures of the actor, suited the part to perfection; and now and then, as in the pretty apostrophe to the bright eyes of his sweet heart—the “Harbour Lights” that had shone steadily for him in storm and darkness—and in a fanciful little speech to the ring which was to make them man and wife, his excellent elocution was invaluable. Mr. Terriss has rarely acted better than he did in this play, and few of his creations have left so pleasant and bright a memory as David Kingsley, the ideal British sailor.

The romantic and manly style of the robust and earnest actor having won so much favour that he was now dubbed by the arch-coiner of amusing *sobriquets* “Adelphi Terriss,” it

was not surprising to find that when Messrs. Pettitt and Grundy's new melodrama, *The Bells of Haslemere*, was produced at the popular theatre in the Strand on July 28th, 1887, the authors had fitted Mr. Terriss with a most sympathetic and important part in Frank Beresford, a handsome, honest lad, rich and happy when the curtain goes up, but soon to be tracked down by the melodramatic Fate which condemns all Adelphi heroes to several acts of dire disaster, perpetual peril, heroic adventure, and miserable misunderstanding, until the auspicious moment comes ere the final fall of the curtain, and Vice is defeated and Virtue triumphant in the good old ridiculous but wholesome way. As the hero, Mr. Terriss had the heaviest share of the dramatic burden upon his broad shoulders, but he sustained the responsibility bravely, acting as occasion required with tenderness, fire, despair, and vigorous energy, and securing an unqualified and honestly earned recognition of his excellent talent.

Mr. Terriss has seldom looked more dashing or acted better than as Jack Medway, in

Messrs. Henry Pettitt and Sydney Grundy's Adelphi drama, produced on July 19th, 1888, and called *The Union Jack*. Dashing and handsome as ever, Mr. Terriss carried the play along with grace and ease, and justified his reputation as a genuine artist by appearing at his best in the scene in which he has to listen to the confession of his sister Ruth, who, during his absence, has lent a too willing ear to the temptations of a certain Captain Morton, the villain of the piece. As Jack Medway Mr. Terriss exhibited a restraint and tenderness as well as a vigour and dash which proved him a thorough actor, equipped in the all-important point of versatility, and made the hero of *The Union Jack* one more worthy addition to his ever-growing *répertoire*.

On April 20th, 1889, Mr. Terriss repeated his admirable personation of David Kingsley in *The Harbour Lights*, and in June reassumed his original character of Captain Molyneux in a revival of *The Shaughraun*.

When Mr. Irving produced *Ravenswood* at the Lyceum Mr. Terriss rejoined his old

company, and created the *rôle* of Hayston of Bucklaw with unqualified success. Moderating his method to the atmosphere of the Lyceum stage, he made his new creation a thoroughly artistic piece of work, wearing his picturesque dress as to the manner born, speaking his audacious, devil-may-care lines with refinement as well as spirit, and indicating the roystering, careless nature of the man he represented with admirable lucidity and discretion. A gallant, handsome figure, and a most intelligent and spirited actor, he made his Hayston of Bucklaw one of the most striking figures in a romantic and very beautiful production. Never for a moment out of harmony with the poetic feeling which was the keynote of the whole play, Mr. Terriss not only added a notable character to his *répertoire* in his representation of Bucklaw, but was recognised as having contributed an important, valuable, and thoroughly artistic creation to a remarkable play. In the careless grace, the quick, petulant temper, the fiery haste for revenge, the occasional touches of something worthier in the man's ill-governed spirit, Mr. Terriss was equally good, and the

impersonation proved as intensely human and naturalistic as it was romantic and picturesque.



MR. TERRISS AS DAVID KINGSLEY IN "THE HARBOUR LIGHTS."

When the curtain falls nightly upon the final act of a play, and the mimic world behind the footlights is exchanged for the real one in which

the kings and courtiers, the heroes and villains of the stage alike share the joys and sorrows of the prosaic, workaday world, Mr. Terriss drives away in the cool, refreshing air to his pretty house in the Avenue, Bedford Park, where the happiest hours of his life are spent, for the popular actor is the most domesticated of men, and likes nothing better than his simple, wholesome life with his wife and clever daughter, Miss Ellaline Terriss, who has already made some name upon the stage.

The home life of the hero of so many melodramas is a model of comfort and good taste. Ferns and flowers, music and art, pleasant society, long rides upon the back of his faithful mare Bessie, lawn tennis and quoits, much smoking and more reading, go to make up the daily round from year's end to year's end, and pictures, books, curios in every corner of the house, evidence the artistic feeling of its tenant.

In the hall, lighted softly with coloured glass, is a portrait of Mr. Terriss as Squire Thornhill, the character in which he got his first great chance; and an extremely interesting Hamlet, bearing the inscription, "To dear Terriss, in

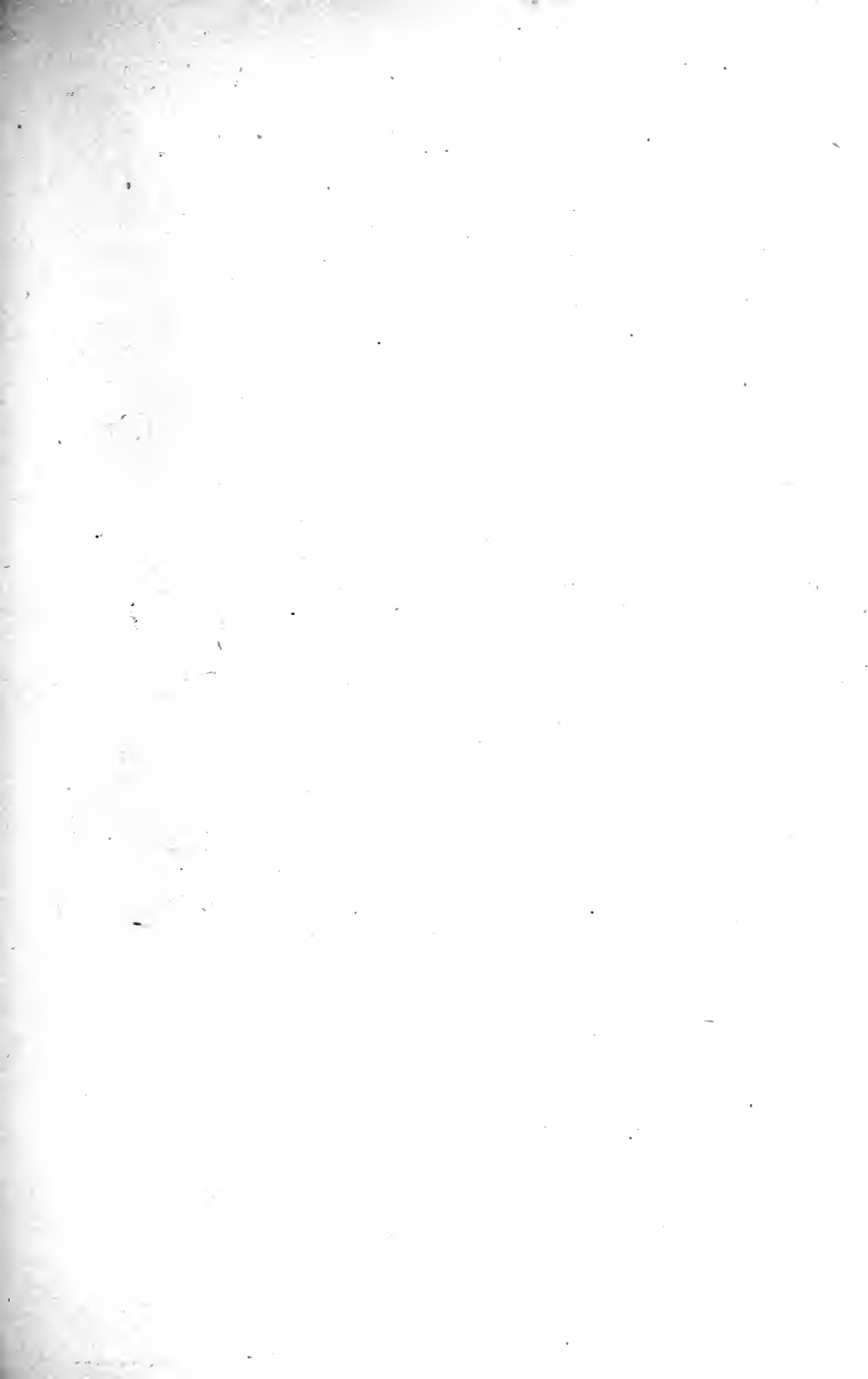
kind remembrance of old times. Sincerely yours, HENRY IRVING." In the pretty drawing-room, too, are other things of peculiar interest—the medal awarded to Mr. Terriss a few years ago by the Royal Humane Society for saving the life of a sailor boy at Deal, and a loving-cup, the gift of "Henry Irving, Ellen Terry, and other friends at the Lyceum."

Mr. Terriss is not fond of society, save that which centres in his own house, and welcomes his pleasant and quiet life in Bedford Park after the artificial surroundings of the stage, the more so, perhaps, that his earlier years were full of stir and vicissitude. The son of a barrister, and nephew of Grote the historian, he was educated at the Bluecoat School, Windermere College, and Bruce Castle, Tottenham. Coming into some few thousands at the age of seventeen, the youthful William Lewin rapidly got rid of them, and then followed a year in China, a term of tea-planting in India, a spell of civil engineering at home, and then the stage, at a salary of eighteen shillings a week. Marrying at twenty-one, he some time afterwards tried sheep-farming in the

Falklands, and horse-breeding in Kentucky ; eventually, however, returning to the stage, and following his profession assiduously, with the result known to all the world. He may be said to have given the contemporary stage its ideal sailor, as Smollett, according to Mr. Hannay, invented the sailor in literature, although, as a matter of fact, there was a low-comedy character, one Ben, in Congreve's *Love for Love*. But it was left to Mr. Terriss to give us the British sailor of to-day, as opposed to Mr. Andrew Lang's typical British seamen, who

“ Freely bless
Their limbs, their timbers, and their eyes ; ”

and of the two species the modern is unquestionably the more agreeable, whether on or off the stage.





FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY ALFRED ELLIS, 20, UPPER BAKER STREET.

Yours. Faithfully
Geo. Pop Smith

you have no idea what a poor
opinion I have of myself —
and how little I deserve it “
Thuddigore

GEORGE GROSSMITH.

WITH much humour and more modesty Mr. Grossmith has written himself down “A Society Clown.” Perhaps it would be more courteous, and certainly quite as correct, to call him a pocket comedian. There is a great deal more of the comedian than the clown about him, for antics and grimacing, although not wholly absent from his method, are only very humble handmaids in attendance upon the genuine comedy in which his whimsical humour is for the most part bodied forth. It was no mere clowning that gave us that satire in action, Bunthorne, the wizen, passion-consumed, fleshly poet of *Patience*, the wildly comical John Wellington Wells in *The Sorcerer*; the droll Lord High Chancellor in *Iolanthe*; the pompous Sir

Joseph Porter, K.C.B., of *H.M.S. Pinafore*, and the other whimsical creations which will always be associated as closely with his name as with those of Mr. W. S. Gilbert and Sir Arthur Sullivan.

That physical peculiarity is a distinct advantage to a whimsical comedian is proved by the success of more than one player who has practically made his reputation by virtue of a lack of inches in height or a redundancy of them in girth, and when to this initial and natural advantage is added a bright wit and a fertile fancy, which enable their owner to exploit himself and his author to the utmost productive possibility, success is within easy reach. Given a huge hill of flesh, and a slow, unctuous method of gesture and voice ; or, it may be, a thin, wiry little frame, sharp voice, and perky little gestures and movements as of a wire-strung figure, and within a certain range of parts every look and motion of a limb is provocative of laughter, independently of the author, or even of any dramatic talent, save that required to make intelligent use of the peculiarities with which nature has dowered the performer.

It cannot, however, be said of Mr. Grossmith that he has traded unduly upon his natural advantages, or allowed them to induce a laxity in the cultivation of his art, for he is an accomplished musician and a mimic of the shrewdest observation, seizing instinctively upon personal peculiarities of physique and manner, and reproducing them with just the artistic amount of exaggeration which in another form of art makes caricature so much more effective than photographic fidelity, no matter how clever it may be. Composer, comedian, parodist, pantomimist, and writer of capital verse, Mr. Grossmith is not only volatility, but versatility itself, and his enormous success proves how welcome, in the grey material and social atmosphere of England, is the man who can bring brightness and humour into our lives, and how glad people are to make haste to laugh, even though, with Figaro, they might add, lest they have cause to weep.

Some of Mr. Grossmith's songs have been peculiarly funny in their way, especially his parodies of the fashionable love song, such as "Thou of my Thou," and his curious "I am

Tired of the Moon, my Love and Myself," with its odd idea,—

“ Oh, I've sung the moon in the key of C,
I've sung the moon in D,
I've sung the moon in the sharp of E,
As well as the flat of D,”

and so on.

With all the whimsical lines which long years of faithful allegiance to the comic muse have written upon Mr. Grossmith's physiognomy, and the irrepressible twinkle in his eyes, there is a certain severity of demeanour about him which lends a special savour to his comicality, as the poignant olive to the soft and insinuating port. There is just the element of surprise in the wit which breaks from the quaint, lined face, like a flash of sunlight through a canopy of branches, which is one of the legitimate, almost indispensable, factors of humour, and the value of contrast and the unexpected is added to the humour of the author and the actor.

The sharp, staccato style of Mr. Grossmith carries with it a certain touch of the imperative. One always feels a little as if one were back in the old pedagogic days, and were constrained

to laugh under penalty of an "imposition," and yet it is a very pleasant compulsion. There is an almost judicial air about Mr. Grossmith at times—an unconscious reminiscence, perhaps, of his old Bow Street days—which makes an audience feel a little like so many members of the junior Bar, whose appreciation of judicial humour is always phenomenally keen, but with this difference, that in the case of Mr. Grossmith the wit is worth a laugh.

That Mr. Grossmith was a humourist from his childhood is evident enough from his very entertaining book of reminiscences; and even when he was a reporter for the *Times* at Bow Street he was laying up a rich store of mental notes, "human documents," to be used in due course with the happiest effect when the police-court should have been superseded by the stage.

Twenty years have elapsed since Mr. Grossmith first set himself to the serious work of amusing the public professionally as an entertainer who, for the most part, played and sang a musical *mélange* of his own composition, his first engagement being in conjunction with

Professor Pepper of "Ghost" renown at the old Polytechnic, on November 11th, 1870, the sketch, which lasted about forty minutes, being called *Human Oddities*, and the first of a number written and composed by the performer himself. It is interesting to know in this connection that Mr. Grossmith is very erratic in his composition of these sketches, the incidental song, "He was a Careful Man," being written during a journey to Deal, and the music composed upon the backs of envelopes during the return journey; while "The Muddle Puddle Porter" was suggested to him while waiting for an hour at Bishopstoke, and hearing an old porter call out the same list of stations over and over again, the whimsical notion occurring to Mr. Grossmith whether, supposing the man were to change his vocation for that of a waiter, he would from sheer force of habit mix up the names of the stations with the names of the dishes.

Mr. Grossmith's engagement at the Polytechnic came to an end in the summer of 1871, and was followed by a brief tour in the provinces with Mr. and Mrs. Howard Paul; and then

came a return to the Polytechnic, Mr. Grossmith still continuing his work at Bow Street in the day-time; and later a tour with his father, after his marriage on May 14th, 1873.

A variety of entertainments in conjunction with his father and with Mr. and Mrs. Howard Paul, and in 1876 and 1877 with the authoress, Miss Florence Marryat, led up to Mr. Grossmith's memorable engagement at the Opéra Comique for his first appearance in the first of the notable series of Gilbert-Sullivan comic operas, *The Sorcerer*, produced on November 17th, 1877, in which he made an immediate success as the eccentric retailer of "penny curses," John Wellington Wells, a whimsical and extravagantly comical performance, and thoroughly in keeping in every detail with the topsy-turvy Gilbertian school of humour. The success of the new style of comic opera, rich in *bizarre* humour, and melodious, scholarly, and "churchy" music—not a matter for surprise, when it is remembered that Sir Arthur Sullivan was saturated with church music from childhood—was so marked that Mr. Grossmith had the satisfaction of bodying forth the peculiarities

of John Wellington Wells for two hundred performances.

Then came, on May 25th, 1878, his entirely admirable impersonation of the Right Hon. Sir Joseph Porter, K.C.B., in the delightful and popular *H.M.S. Pinafore; or, The Lass that loved a Sailor*, in which Mr. Grossmith displayed a distinct originality of method that stamped him as a comedian of the best type, capable of making his points without apparent effort, and full of a dry humour which was all the more effective from its cleverly simulated unconsciousness. Sir Joseph Porter was a masterly piece of dramatic caricature, full of human nature as well as humour, and the success of the opera was phenomenal, the piece running for something like seven hundred consecutive nights. During the run of *Pinafore* Mr. Grossmith used to give musical sketches after the opera at the Saturday *matinées*, as well as appearing in private houses, and at Belford's benefit, on December 10th, 1879, as Mr. Winkle in *Bardell v. Pickwick*.

It was not until April 3rd, 1880, that Mr. Grossmith had an opportunity of creating

another Gilbertian character ; but when upon that date the new opera, *The Pirates of Penzance*, was produced at the Opéra Comique he impersonated Major General Stanley with a finished and racy humour which made it the military complement of his excellent study of Sir Joseph Porter.

On April 23rd, 1881, Mr. Grossmith created a character which has ever since been accepted as a type of a certain class of æsthetic and intense poets, as ridiculous as they deemed themselves sublime. All the now nearly forgotten follies of æstheticism were caricatured by the comedian in the character of Reginald Bunthorne, in *Patience*, with a breadth and vigour of treatment which made the impersonation one of the drollest of the contemporary stage. His burlesque "confession," in his character of "an æsthetic sham," and his lyrical recipe for the production of an æsthete, were bits of pure comedy as quaint, whimsical, and original as the most *blasé* playgoer could have desired. The figure of the "intense" young man, fired with a supposed yearning for stained-glass attitudes and transcendental platitudes, was remarkably

quaint, and lingers in the memory with cameo-like clearness.

Scarcely less successful in their way were his subsequent creations of the Lord High Chancellor in *Iolanthe*, produced at the Savoy Theatre in November, 1882, and of King Gama, in *Princess Ida*, on January 5th, 1884, which was followed by a revival of *The Sorcerer* on October 11th, Mr. Grossmith resuming his original part.

As Koko, Lord High Executioner of Titipu, in that brilliant example of the Gilbert-Sullivan series, *The Mikado*, produced at the Savoy on March 14th, 1885, Mr. Grossmith had a particularly good part, and gave every line of the immensely funny libretto its full value. His droll enunciation of the cynical bits of humour which the author put into the mouth of Koko, and his arguments with Pooh-Bah, being irresistible in their dry drollery. In this rôle Mr. Grossmith introduced a particularly effective "flop," which he perpetrated at the most unexpected moments with startling effect.

On January 22nd, 1887, Mr. Grossmith created the character of Robin Oakapple in



MR. GROSSMITH AS REGINALD BUNTHORNE IN "PATIENCE."



Ruddigore, in which he was as droll as ever, showing, too, in the big scene of the piece, in which the family portraits come to life, a comicality as thorough as it was unforced.

The final rôle created by Mr. Grossmith during his long engagement at the Savoy was that of Jack Point in *The Yeomen of the Guard*, produced on October 3rd, 1888, after revivals of *The Pirates of Penzance* on March 17th and *The Mikado* on June 7th; and in its way it was a more remarkable performance than its predecessors, for in it the comedian came out in something of a new light, showing a pathos as well as a quaint humour, and illustrating, in the person of the unfortunate jester, that the cap and bells may jangle to a very melancholy tune, and the fool's motley may hide a heart full of misery. The alternations of mood necessitated by this latest creation were excellently rendered by Mr. Grossmith, and the impersonation was a worthy climax of a long series of clever creations. He played it for the last time upon August 17th, 1889, to an enthusiastic audience, who manifested by cordial applause their regret at the severance of his connection

with the Savoy after nearly twelve years of Gilbert-Sullivan opera, and their good wishes for his future career.

Since that memorable, and, so far as London playgoers are concerned, regrettable day, Mr. Grossmith has had an enormous success as a single-handed entertainer, coining money and winning immense favour wherever he has appeared, and his success has been well earned.

Both on and off the stage Mr. Grossmith is very popular, and although his nomadic career interferes in some degree with the exercise of his hospitable instincts, there is still to him and to his many friends an unfailing charm about his pretty London home, where pictures, books, and music lend an artistic atmosphere to the whole place which is thoroughly characteristic and pleasant.

Among Mr. Grossmith's curios, works of art, and personal *souvenirs*, is the handkerchief, discoloured with age, which the great originator of the "one-man" entertainment system, John Parry, was in the habit of holding in mincing fashion in his sketch, *Mrs. Roseleaf's Little Evening Party*; a photograph, signed, of the

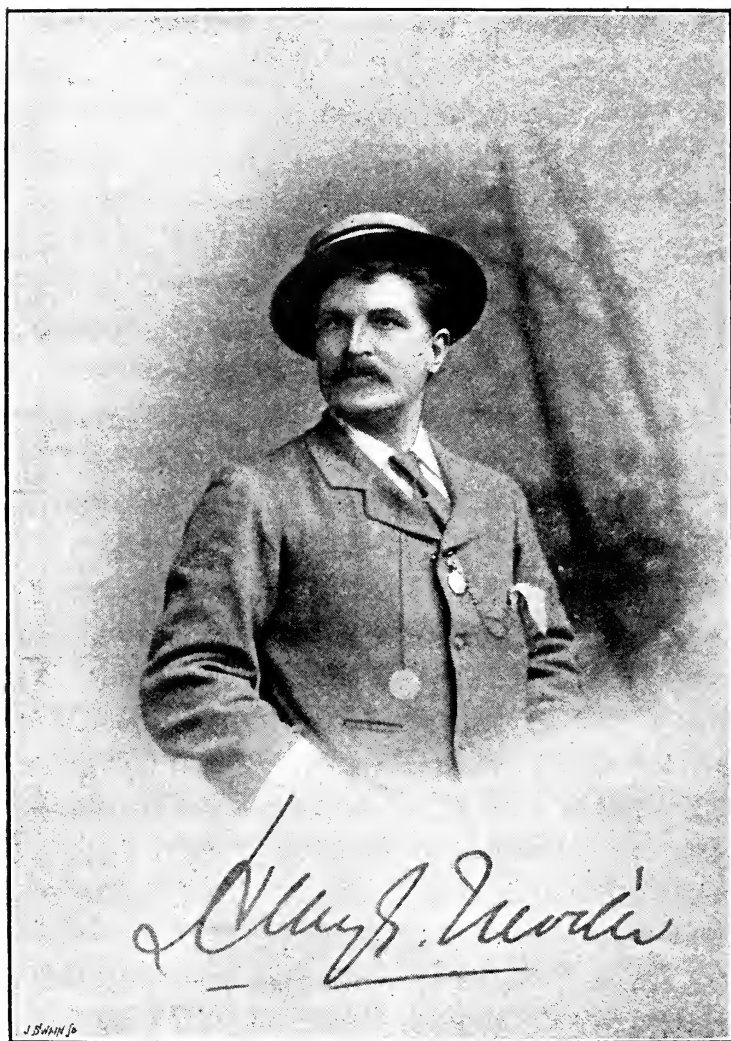
late Duke of Albany, given to Mr. Grossmith by his Royal Highness during a visit at Claremont in 1883; and some excellent landscapes by John O'Connor, and two, in particular, of Lincoln Castle. But the piano is the *genius loci* in Mr. Grossmith's home. A perfect master of the instrument, he makes it talk, laugh, sing, do everything that is human but sneer; and the greatest pleasure which he gives his friends is a *mélange* of songs, sketches, imitations of other professional men,—actors, musicians, and entertainers,—in which their peculiarities are reproduced with just sufficient exaggeration and caricature to be amusing without being uncharitable.

It would not, however, be possible for Mr. Grossmith to say or do anything calculated to wound the feelings of other people, for he is one of the kindest-hearted of men, and even when, as he admits, he has subsidised friends and acquaintances for certain oddities of manner or style which have afforded him material for caricature, he has taken care to manipulate his subject so carefully that not only have his subjects keenly enjoyed his whimsical

impersonations, but have laughed as heartily as any one at them, and promptly and instinctively recognised in the Grossmith gallery of eccentricities everybody but themselves.

On November 14th, 1890, Mr. Grossmith had the honour of appearing before the Queen at Balmoral Castle, and was personally received, and graciously thanked by Her Majesty at the conclusion of his entertainment.





FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. BONING & SMALL, 22, BAKER STREET, W.

HENRY G. NEVILLE.

A STERLING actor of the robust and romantic school, with handsome, clear-cut features, a gallant bearing, and a strong musical voice, Mr. Henry Neville is one of the very pleasantest of all the stage heroes of the period. Even when he is clad in the commonplace frock-coat and gleaming tall hat of to-day there is something about this popular actor irresistibly suggestive of the chivalrous seventeenth century; the *chefs-d'œuvres* of Poole and Lincoln & Bennett seem to resolve themselves into bright-hued mantle and cavalier head-gear, gay with sweeping plumes, and the actor stands confessed a delightful anachronism.

Alert and *débonnaire*, manly and dashing, Mr. Neville, despite his thirty years of stage life, remains a splendid type of manhood in its prime of vigour of mind and body. He obviously possesses some *elixir vitæ* which

enables him to set Time at defiance, and his abundant vitality seems to call out an answering animation in his audience, and to establish a sympathy between them which doubles their enjoyment of a play—a most valuable quality, distinctly personal, innate, and impossible of acquisition by even the severest study. He is one of the few living actors who to a mastery of the technique of his art unites the influence of a sympathetic style, which has enabled him to win and retain all through his career a popularity which must have not only made his many successes doubly pleasant, but must have made the hard work inseparable from so active a career something like a labour of love.

Like all strong, manly men, Mr. Neville possesses an admirable vein of tenderness, which makes his dramatic love-making peculiarly effective; and when either pathos or righteous indignation are demanded, there is the true note, the genuine ring in each of them, which puts an actor and his audience *en rapport* at once, and enables them to accept his art as sympathetically as if it were actuality. Long experience in almost every class of character and play has

given him an intimate knowledge of his work, and has taught him how to utilise his natural and acquired gifts and such opportunities as are afforded him by the author to the fullest extent ; and he is essentially one of those reliable actors who are seen to advantage in a strong play but become absolutely invaluable in a weak one. His very walk inspires confidence, and when his well-knit figure and frank face are *en évidence* they seem to give a pleasant sense of security, without which there is no perfect enjoyment.

Mr. Neville's histrionic talent is hereditary, his father being the late well-known actor-manager, John Neville, and the son had the advantage of a training by that able actor, eventually making his first appearance in London, at the age of three-and-twenty, on October 8th, 1860, at the Lyceum Theatre, then under the *régime* of Madame Celeste. On November 12th Mr. Neville appeared as Victor Savignie in *Adrienne ; or, The Secret of a Life*. Then came some provincial experience, and in 1861 he became a member of Messrs. Emden and Robson's company at the Olympic, where he

remained until 1866, playing leading parts; and it was during this engagement that in May 1863 he created his famous part of Bob Brierly in Tom Taylor's ever-popular drama, *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*, adapted from MM. Edouard Brisbarre and Eugène Nus' piece, *Léonard*. The thoroughly English and sympathetic character of the Lancashire lad who had so terrible a struggle to live down the errors of his youth has ever gone straight to the heart of the British public; and Mr. Neville brought out the pathos of the part as well as its manly courage with rare skill, and the unaffected naturalism of his acting raised Bob Brierly from the level of a mere stage puppet to that of a big-hearted, suffering, striving man, whose sorrows were very real, and whose honest remorse and endeavour to blot out the blunders of the past compelled a sympathy not always given to equally deserving cases in the sober world outside the theatre walls. The convincing earnestness which was the keynote of Mr. Neville's rendering of this striking and sympathetic character has ever since been one of the actor's most conspicuous and most

valuable qualities, and has never failed to make even comparatively weak parts at least respectable; while in effective characters and situations it has given the fullest value to the author's work.

During this engagement Mr. Neville did plenty of excellent work, among his other successes being Henry Dunbar in Tom Taylor's adaptation of Miss Braddon's skilfully constructed novel, and Jean Valjean in *The Yellow Passport*, his own version of Victor Hugo's "Les Misérables."

From the Olympic Mr. Neville migrated to the Adelphi, where he gained still more approval for his admirably made-up and thoughtfully played miner, Job Armroyd in *Lost in London*; a vigorous Dick Dashall in Morton's *The Way to Get Married*, and as an equally clever Farmer Allan, in Charles Reade's version of the Laureate's idyllic poem, *Dora*; as well as appearing in the same dramatist's powerful play, *Put Yourself in His Place*, in which piece Mr. Neville gave ample proof, not merely of an intelligent conception of his part, but of a conscientious care and

study which resulted in a highly-finished and convincing impersonation of a hard-working, hard-headed Sheffield workman.

At the termination of this engagement Mr. Neville appeared at various other London theatres with success, and in 1873 he returned to the Olympic in the capacity of lessee as well as actor, and remained there until August 1879, doing much excellent work both as actor and manager, producing the following pieces, and playing in most of them: during the season of 1873-4 Byron's *Sour Grapes*; Robert Reece's *Richelieu Redressed*; James Mortimer's *School for Intrigue*; and Tom Taylor's *Lady Clancarty*, in which Mr. Neville's fine frank style made Lord Clancarty, the big-hearted, impulsive Irish peer, a thoroughly fascinating figure; in 1874-5 John Oxenford's *Two Orphans*, in which Mr. Neville's Pierre was a remarkably able performance; James Albery's *The Spendthrift*, and a revival of *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*; 1875-6, Mr. W. G. Wills's *Buckingham*; Mr. Joseph Hatton's *Clytie*; Muskerly's *The Gascon*, and Mr. B. L. Farjeon's *Home, Sweet Home*; 1876-7, *No Thoroughfare*, by Wilkie

Collins and Charles Dickens, Mr. Neville undertaking the rôle of George Vendale; *Si Slocum*, by Messrs. F. Trayne and Tayleur; Robert Buchanan's *Queen of Connaught*; *The Wife's Secret*; Charles Reade's *Scuttled Ship*; *The Violin Maker of Cremona*, by François Coppée and Mr. Morell, and *Lady Audley's Secret*; 1877-8, Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*; *Henry Dunbar*; Mr. Burnand's *Turn of the Tide*, and Charles Reade's *Jealousy*; and in 1878-9 a successful revival of *The Two Orphans*. In August 1878 Mr. Neville appeared as Pierre Lorance in *Proof*, at the Adelphi, and in the summer of 1879 he retired from the management of the Olympic, and went to the Adelphi, appearing as Master Walter in *The Hunchback*; Charles Surface—a fine dashing performance—and his original creation, Bob Brierly, in a revival of *The Ticket-of-Leave Man*.

Other effective impersonations during this Adelphi engagement were the Earl of Leicester in *Amy Robsart*; Perrinet Leclerc in *The Crimson Cross*; Jack Weatherby in Boucicault's *Rescued*, a strong study of a working-man, and a racy, humorous John

Browdie in *Nicholas Nickleby*; and in 1880 a careful, manly rendering of the thankless part of St. Cyr in Mr. W. G. Wills's *Ninon*; a bold and clever Captain Molyneux in Boucicault's drama, *The Shaughraun*; Mike in the same author's *The O'Dowd*, and a capital Connor O'Kennedy in *The Green Bushes*.

April 1881 found Mr. Neville at the Princess's Theatre, playing the parts of Roland Lacroix, a young Lancer, and hero of an unsympathetic romance, and Monsieur Ferron in Mr. Richard Lee's *Branded*; and on September 24th he made a most favourable impression as Achille de Mortemar, whom he made a captivating, spirited fellow despite his moral delinquences, in Mr. Maurice Barrymore's *Honour*, at the Court Theatre, where he also appeared on November 7th as Sandy McElrath in Dion Boucicault's *Mimi*.

On February 4th, 1882, Mr. Neville appeared in his admirable impersonation of Charles Surface at the Vaudeville Theatre; and among other notable appearances of this period may be mentioned a winning and



MR. HENRY NEVILLE AS "GEORGE
KINGSMILL."

D.P.E.C.



pleasant impersonation of Lord Clancarty at a *matinée* at the Brighton Theatre in April 1883. As George Kingsmill in Mr. H. A. Jones's drama, *Saints and Sinners*, produced at the Vaudeville Theatre on September 25th, 1884. Mr. Neville made a great success, proving all that was manly, tender, ardent, very gentle and protecting with the girl he loved, very vigorous in his contempt for the villain for whom she sacrificed her happiness. The strength and winning gentleness which Mr. Neville knows so well how to combine were commendably conspicuous in this impersonation. From first to last George Kingsmill was a sympathy-compelling figure, and of great value to the play, in which the appeal to the emotions was so excellently direct and forcible. It is in these intensely human parts that Mr. Neville is seen at his best; and his stalwart, great-hearted, honest young miller remains a notable and very pleasant memory of a particularly effective play.

In Messrs. Pettitt and Harris's strong and interesting Drury Lane drama *Human Nature*, produced on September 12th, 1885, Mr. Neville

was furnished with a sympathetic, bright, and manly *rôle* in Captain Temple, a man full of excellent instincts, with a not wholly blameless past, but admirable resolutions for the future, and a wholesome joy in his wife and bright little son. There was very little rant and no cant in the play. Action and diction alike were manly and healthy. Brave alike as a man and a soldier, Captain Temple was at no loss to command the sympathy of the audience from the first; and, as he passed through the trying vicissitudes which must inevitably befall the hero of popular melodrama, he was a picturesque and pleasant figure, strong and able physically and mentally, and bearing the principal burden of the play with ease and grace upon his sturdy shoulders. Whenever opportunity occurred Mr. Neville exhibited various phases of passionate feeling with vigour and completeness, and the impersonation was both a popular and an artistic success.

The year 1887 was a busy one with Mr. Neville. On September 12th he appeared as Graham Macdonald in Mr. Robert Buchanan's play *The Blue Bells of Scotland*, at the Novelty

Theatre, with all his wonted dash and vigour, making the hero a most picturesque and fascinating figure. On October 6th he made all that could be made of the thankless part of Lord Islay in the same author's drama *Fascination*, produced at a *matinée* at the Novelty; on November 5th he appeared as Sir Rupert in Mr. C. Marsham Rae's *The Witch*, at the St. James's Theatre, when the play was revived, having been originally produced at the Princess's Theatre on April 26th; on the 19th of the same month, at the same theatre, he impersonated Colonna in a revival of Richard Taylor Shiel's *Evadne*, in his most robust fashion; and on December 29th, at a Criterion *matinée*, his acting in Dr. Harry Lobb's adaptation of Miss Braddon's powerful novel "Wyllard's Weird" was of the utmost value to the play, and a remarkably fine piece of work.

January 28th, 1888, found Mr. Neville back at the Olympic, playing with all his old gusto and effect the part of Bob Brierly, which he had created a quarter of a century before, and in which all his best qualities as an actor were still conspicuously present; and on February 8th

he appeared as Henry Lomax in Mrs. Campbell Praed and Mr. Richard Lee's adaptation of Mrs. Praed's novel, *The Bonds of Wedlock*, produced at the Opéra Comique. In this difficult and not very pleasing rôle Mr. Neville displayed much force, and the tenderness of Henry Lomax towards his little girl, and his manly, dogged belief in his wife's fidelity, redeemed in a measure the selfishness of the man. Mr. Neville's acting was excellent, and made a complex nature lucid by its force and variety.

On June 2nd, 1888, Mr. Neville played Triplet to Mrs. Bernard Beere's Peg Woffington in a revival of *Masks and Faces* at the Opéra Comique; and although there was no conspicuous originality in his rendering of the part, neither was there any noticeable weakness, the text being excellently spoken, and the "business" helpful and significant. Four days later Mr. Neville appeared as Count Heidegger in Mr. C. J. Ribton Turner's *Handsome is that Handsome does*, produced at the Vaudeville, in which for art's sake the actor for once permitted himself an uncomely make-up, acting with

admirable skill, and making the impersonation a clever and interesting piece of work ; and on September 8th he again took up the time-honoured rôle of Bob Brierly in what "Punch" once called *The Ticket of Never Leave Off Man*. On October 11th, at the same theatre, Mr. Neville reappeared in his pathetic part of the cripple Pierre in a revival of *The Two Orphans* ; and on November 16th he migrated to the Princess's Theatre, creating with equal virility and tenderness the entirely sympathetic rôle of Jack Dudley, a fine young Englishman, who is arrested for murder, condemned to be guillotined, escapes, and passes through a sequence of thrilling adventures, in Mr. Henry Pettitt's sensational drama *Hands Across the Sea*.

On September 23rd, 1889, Mr. Neville created the rôle of Charles II. in Messrs. Henry Hamilton and Augustus Harris's historical drama, *The Royal Oak*, and the gallant bearing and handsome person of the actor fitted the part to perfection. The *débonnaire* frankness of the Merry Monarch, his easy condescension with his subjects, especially when they were young and pretty, his moments of semi-pathos

and graver reflection, and his courtly grace and natural dignity, even though the latter was not always very apparent, made the figure a pleasant one—if, indeed, a little conventional. Mr. Neville perhaps rather over-emphasised the roystering side of the light-hearted king, but his conception of the part was at least consistent; and if it did not chime with that of those who would fain forget the less dignified and less kingly side of that much-discussed monarch, it was true to nature if, as some would say, not to history. Mr. Neville's Charles II. was at all events a bright, good-natured, careless, picturesque figure, whose faults were half condoned by his manner of committing them; and if his king was rather that of the dramatist than of the historian, it was none the less a good stage figure, and the life and soul of a not too exciting play. His "business" in the famous oak of Boscobel,

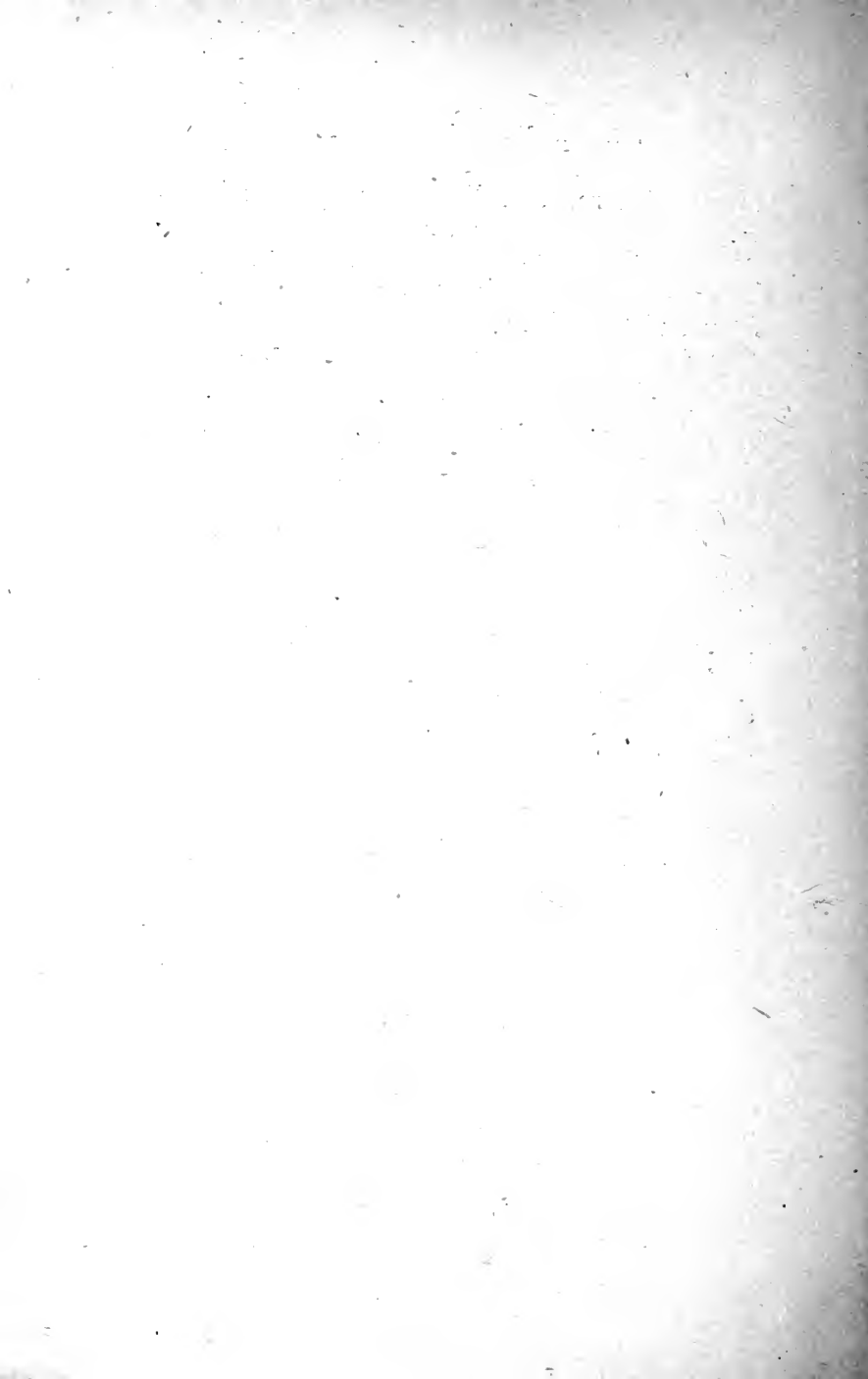
"Wherein the younger Charles abode
Till all the paths were dim;
And far below the Roundhead rode,
And hummed a surly hymn,"

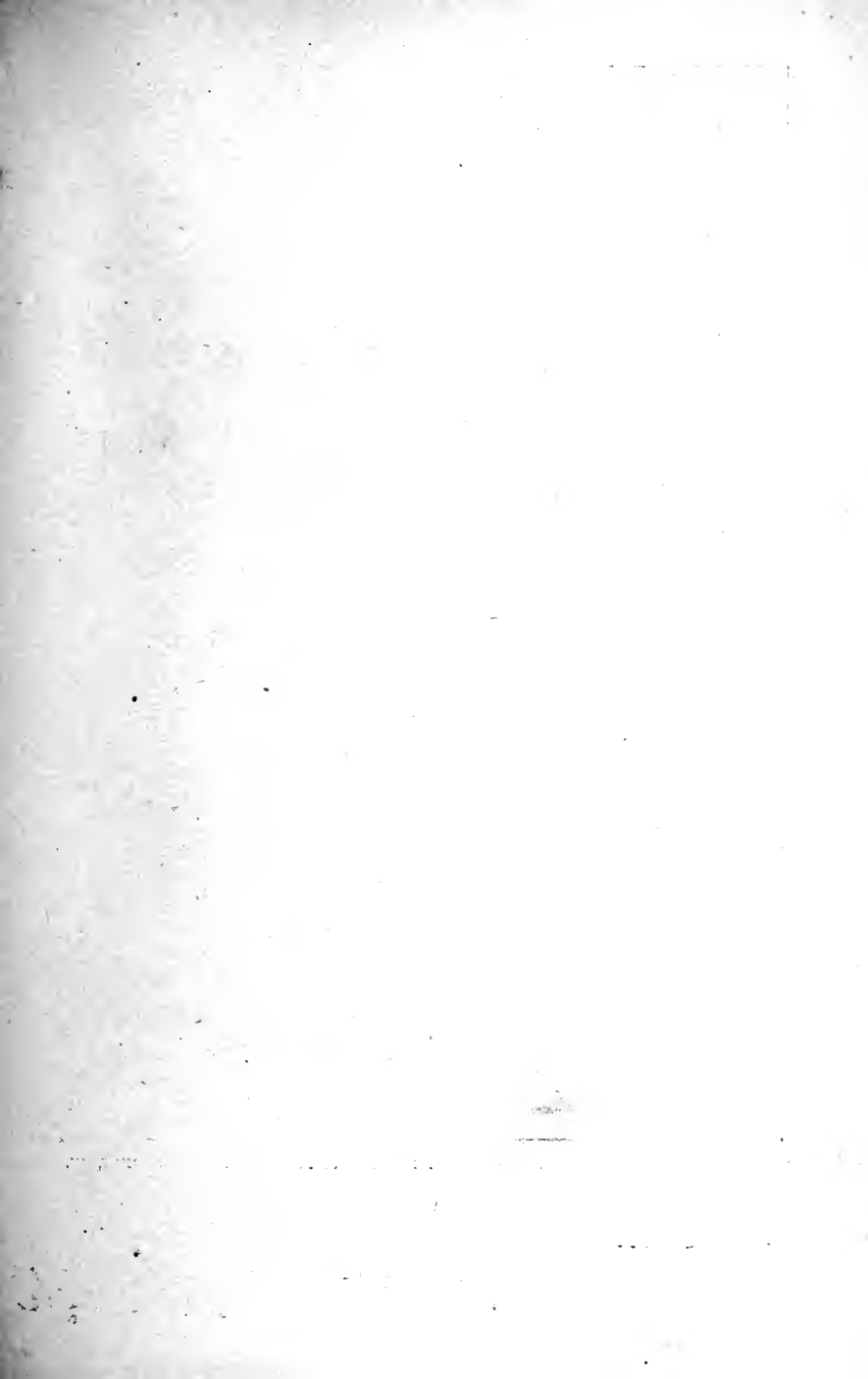
was amusing and smart, and his whole reading

of the part rather a light-comedy one; but for all that he was a popular and picturesque personage, and kept the audience in good humour from end to end of the play.

Subsequently to this engagement Mr. Neville accepted a lucrative offer to "star" in the United States, where his success was immediate and unqualified.

Off the stage Mr. Neville retains much of the cheery *bonhomie* which is one of his attractions on it, and he is as popular with all who know him in his private capacity as he is with the playgoers who have given him their goodwill and admiration for some thirty years.







FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MESSRS. ELLIOTT & FRY, 55, BAKER STREET, W.

"Tell them there are no seats to let —
not even a "Stall" for the donkey"
Yours always
Richard Brough

LIONEL BROUGH.

IF Lord Chamberlain Polonius were a playgoer of the period, and some contemporary Hamlet were to ask him for a definition of Mr. Lionel Brough, he might well be excused if he were to launch out into long-winded categorical description, and write down the popular comedian as being equally excellent in as many phases of his art as the famous First Player and his company: "Tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral," scene indivisible, or poem unlimited.

Mr. Brough has indeed "played many parts" during the four-and-thirty years of his stage-life, and his industry and talent have made him quite a metropolitan institution. His broad, frank, histrionic method, especially as a low-comedian, has the advantage of saving his

audience an immense amount of trouble. His creations are stamped with a very unmistakable birthmark. There is no subtlety about Mr. Brough. His make-up, his stage entry, his "business," before a single word is spoken, say to the audience as plainly as so many words, "It's my business to make you laugh, and if you don't laugh it shall not be my fault."

There are two drawbacks to such a laughter-compelling reputation—a comedian like Mr. Brough, with an excellent talent for pathos when occasion serves, finds it difficult to get himself taken seriously. If he should by chance find himself cast for a part which has its moments of earnestness or tenderness, he is in grave danger of having his pathos entirely misunderstood—even resented. He is expected to make people laugh, and they feel defrauded if he attempts to touch their hearts; and yet, like all genuine comedians, he fully recognises the truth that the springs of tears and laughter lie quite closely enough together in human nature to be within the range of one actor who knows his work. Another drawback is that there is the ever-present temptation to obtain a laugh at

any cost, which will almost inevitably lead an actor to indulge in an occasional extravagance, which, if it does not positively overpass "the limits of becoming mirth," is not always consistent with artistic feeling.

Although Mr. Brough has figured in many legitimate comedy parts where the text has been rich in genuine humour, it must be remembered that on many occasions he has had to make bricks with a minimum of straw, and has had irresistible temptation to "gag" and to exaggerate any grotesque or fantastic "business" justified in the faintest degree by the text itself. When the public insist upon being amused by a particular actor he must inevitably feel the responsibility keenly, sometimes almost intolerably; and it is not difficult to picture him driven to despair by the paucity of material provided for him by a dramatic author, and plunging wildly into the most exuberant and ebullient antics, which, while they make the groundlings laugh, are calculated to make the judicious grieve.

Even in the most frothy and *fin de siècle* comic opera Mr. Brough seems to belong to the good old school of acting, and in that is much.

of his value and, to students of the stage, his attraction, as there is always something pleasant in the contemplation of links between the present and the past. There is a fine, full-flavoured, thoroughly John Bullish, downright honesty of purpose about Mr. Brough's method that it is impossible to quarrel with, and even if his self-satisfaction is sometimes an atom too obvious, it is so frankly expressed that it disarms instead of challenges criticism; while the playgoing public know that he has done such yeoman service in his time that they invariably welcome him with all the cordiality of personal regard. To win and retain for so many years so full a measure of popularity is proof positive of merit, and, although it is not always easy to accept all Mr. Brough's methods, it is indisputable that he is a genuine comedian, who has earned his popularity by honest effort and natural talent of a high order.

In the case of an actor like Mr. Brough it is out of the question to treat in detail of the hundreds of characters which he has created or impersonated during his thirty-six years of professional life. The very variety of his as-

sumptions may be accepted *en bloc* as evidence of his ability, and it is only necessary to refer in detail to his more notable and characteristic creations.

Mr. Brough, who was born at Pontypool on March 10th, 1836, came of a dramatic family. His father, Mr. Barnabas Brough, wrote a number of successful plays under the *nom de plume* of Barnard de Burgh, and his brothers, William and Robert, were wits and *littérateurs* of no mean calibre. Yet, as quite a young man, Lionel Brough seemed more inclined to emulate his brother John C. Brough, Secretary of the London Institution, and began his working life in the office of "Mr. Things-not-generally-known" Timbs, the then editor of the *Illustrated London News*, migrating afterwards to the *Daily Telegraph*, of which paper he was assistant-publisher in its early days, and in connection with which he organised a body of two hundred and forty boys to sell the paper in the streets, thus originating what has proved a large source of revenue to many journals, which might otherwise have remained obscure and unsuccessful, and, like a

newspaper *Frankenstein*, creating a monster which now often confronts him in the street to his inconvenience.

The "first appearance upon any stage" was made by Mr. Brough in excellent company upon the Lyceum boards, when that theatre was under the management of Madame Vestris and Mr. Charles Mathews, in an extravaganza called *Prince Pretty Pet*, by William Brough, and a farce called *My Fellow Clerk*.

At this early period of his life, in December 1854, Mr. Brough had two strings to his bow, retaining his situation at the *Illustrated London News* office during the day, dashing across to the Lyceum for rehearsal at lunchtime, thereby drawing a very modest salary at both places, and earning the good-humoured *sobriquet* of "My Lord Double Fee" from his comrades in the theatre.

Upon the death of Madame Vestris in 1856 Mr. Brough left the stage awhile, but returned to the Lyceum in 1858, adopting the *nom de théâtre* of "Lionel Porter," but proving himself anything but a "Muddle Puddle Porter" in Robert Brough's burlesque, *The Siege of Troy*,

and in the manager, Edmund Falconer's, *Francesca*. But again Mr. Brough retired from the stage, and returned to his first love, taking an engagement on the staff of the new daily paper, the *Morning Star*, and remaining with it for five years.

Then came a spell of single-handed entertaining in London, the principal item in his programme being a piece called *Cinderella*, written for him *con amore* by his brothers, H. J. Byron, Leicester Buckingham, Frank Talfourd, Andrew Halliday, and others; and after this he gave various entertainments at the old Polytechnic for a year, and travelled the provinces with the once-celebrated *Pepper's Ghost* exhibitions.

With other members of the Savage Club Mr. Brough had the honour of acting before the Queen, the Prince Consort, and the Royal Family, in aid of the "Lancashire Famine Relief Fund," and in 1864 he became a member of Mr. Alexander Henderson's company at the Prince of Wales' Theatre, Liverpool, where he remained more than three years, playing leading parts, and winning much popularity.

During the early days of this engagement Mr. Brough's salary was not very large, yet it sufficed to keep body and soul together, but left little margin for clothes or little luxuries. As it happened, too, Mr. Henderson made rather a close friend of the young comedian, and frequently took him out with him into society, to dinner-parties, and other festivities, necessitating what seemed to Lionel Brough a wanton and reckless extravagance in gloves. At last he made up his mind to break the matter delicately to his manager. "If I'm to go out like this, Mr. Henderson, you really must raise my salary," protested the young comedian, mildly.

"All right, my boy, remind me next week," answered Henderson, readily.

"I *did* remind him," says Mr. Brough, "and he *did* raise it—from pounds to guineas!"

It was when Mr. Brough was playing in after years at Liverpool that he, for the only time in his life, played a part without "make-up," for reasons not unconnected with his British love of sport. He had made one of a merry party upon a coach for the Chester Cup, and, trusting to a good-natured friend's

assurance that he would get him back to the theatre in good time, he backed the favourite with a light heart. But by-and-bye the awful responsibility of keeping the stage waiting pressed upon him with dire urgency, and when they reached Birkenhead there was a delay with the boat over the Mersey. Fuming and fretting, at last Mr. Brough reached the theatre, where he was playing John Chodd, Jun., in *Society*, only to learn that two overtures had been played, that his understudy was just preparing to go on and read the part, when to everyone's relief Mr. Brough arrived breathless and perspiring in time to rush on the stage just as he had come from Chester, without, figuratively or literally, shaking the dust from his feet in testimony against the dilatory ferry-boat.

Engagements at the Amphitheatre and the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, paved the way for Mr. Brough's return to London, where he played the part of Dard in *The Double Marriage*, upon the opening of the new Queen's Theatre in October 1867; and it was at the Queen's that he afterwards made his

first great success in London as Ben Garner in *Dearer than Life* on January 8th, 1868, displaying a whimsicality and genuine humour in his enactment of the drunken old reprobate which enabled him to divide the honours of the evening with Mr. Toole, and compelled the critics to recognise in him a young actor of strong individuality of method, and a welcome recruit to the not too numerous army of comedians with the courage of their convictions. Then, as ever, Mr. Brough did not hesitate to "let himself go" when opportunity served, with the result that he was at once credited with a reputation for thoroughness which he has never since lost.

Among other pieces in which Mr. Brough took part during his engagement at the Queen's Theatre was Mr. Boucicault's adaptation of "The Cricket on the Hearth," called *Dot*, and during his waits he was in the habit of playing cribbage with his *confrère*, the late John Clayton. Upon one occasion they were so engrossed in their game that the call-boy had to call them twice before they heard them, when, still full of the game, Mr. Brough snatched the property baby

from Tilly Slowboy, and dashed on to the stage ejaculating, “ Fifteen two ! ”

From this time Mr. Brough’s successes came thick and fast, among them being his impersonations in *The Lancashire Lass*, *Not Guilty*, Gilbert’s burlesque *La Vivandière*, Robert Reece’s burlesque *The Stranger*, and Mr. Burnand’s burlesque of *Foul Play*; and after some provincial touring in the same company as Mr. Irving he entered upon an engagement at the St. James’s, where he played Tony Lumpkin and Paul Pry with conspicuous ability and success, as well as creating with the extravagant, rollicking humour so characteristic of his stage style the rôles of Captain John Smith in the burlesque *La Belle Sauvage*, and Black Brandon in *My Poll and My Partner Joe*. After this came an engagement at the Holborn Theatre, and in August 1872 an engagement as first low-comedian and stage manager at Covent Garden, for the production of that remarkable spectacular piece *Babil and Bijou*. This was followed by successful engagements at the Gaiety, the Globe, the Folly, and New Royalty Theatres, during which

time he played Bluebeard for more than three hundred nights, also making an excellent impression in other rôles, both in burlesque and comedy, notably as Sonbyson Siel in Albery's *Wig and Gown*. During this time Mr. Brough played at many *matinées*, and subsequently accepted an engagement at the Imperial Theatre, where on April 23rd, 1879, he made a great hit as Claude Melnotte in Mr. W. Young's burlesque of *The Lady of Lyons*. It was at the Imperial also, and at a series of Gaiety *matinées*, that Mr. Brough brought his excellent method to bear effectively in old comedy revivals—his impersonation of Scrub in Farquhar's play, *The Beaux' Stratagem*, on September 22nd, showing a keen comprehension of the spirit and intention of the author, which was also noticeable in his Ollapod in Coleman's comedy *The Poor Gentleman*; and his Marplot in *The Country Girl*, and Croaker in *The Good-natured Man*, were admirably sound and well-balanced impersonations—thoughtful, intelligent pieces of work, instinct with the true spirit of old comedy.

In 1880 Mr. Brough made an excellently

droll Moses in *The Vicar of Wakefield*, at the Imperial, and appeared in widely contrasted parts, a Shakespearean revival at the Imperial on February 25th, and a new *opéra-bouffe* at the Alhambra on December 20th, giving him an opportunity of satisfying his public in both of his more characteristic styles of acting. As Touchstone he was dry, sententious, quaint, if a little inclined to over-emphasise the whimsicality of the part; as Jaques quietly effective, and as Valentine, in Hervé and Alfred Maltby's *Mefistoféle II.*, he allowed his sense of humour to have full play, and was a conspicuous and entertaining figure in the stage-picture. On June 13th of the following year Mr. Brough gave another example of his Shakespearean vein of humour as Dromio of Ephesus in a revival of *The Comedy of Errors* at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, and on September 19th he created with rich humour the part of Laurent XVII. in Messrs. Reece, Farnie, and Audran's comic opera *The Mascotte*, produced at the Theatre Royal, Brighton. Mr. Brough was entrusted with the best and smartest "lines" in the libretto, and took care

to deliver them with due point, making the foolish and unfortunate monarch an irresistibly comical personage.

After being originally produced at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, on August 17th, 1883, the Farnie-Offenbach operatic burlesque *La Vie* was put upon the stage of the Avenue Theatre, with Mr. Brough as the Baron von Gondremarcke, a sufficiently humorous creation. Mr. Brough's broadly farcical style made him very amusing as the Beadle in the comic opera *Nell Gwynne*, produced at the Avenue on February 7th, 1884, and with his comical catchword, "Vat a larks!" he was inimitable. Upon the occasion of the elaborate Haymarket revival of *The Rivals*, on May 3rd, 1884, a production in which so much care was spent upon the scenery and mounting as to lead a cynical critic to remark that "when the history of the stage during the latter half of the nineteenth century comes to be written, it will be found that the two great dramatists of the period were Mr. Hann and Mr. Telbin," Mr. Brough was an inimitable Bob Acres. In the duel scene he was humorous to the last degree, and his whole impersona-

tion was extremely clever, its one fault being a tendency to insist somewhat too forcibly upon the cowardice of the immortal braggart. At a Globe *matinée* on June 11th of Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton's *Happy-go-Lucky* Mr. Brough impersonated Mat Teams, a good-natured, weak-willed, drinking fellow, with humour and without offence ; a positive and negative proof of artistic ability of which the latter is, perhaps, the more convincing, as stage drunkenness must be represented with extreme tact to be even tolerable.

On September 9th, 1884, Mr. Brough had an opportunity of giving the audience which filled Toole's Theatre a taste of his quality in widely divergent characters. Appearing first as Ben Bloss, a police inspector, in Mr. T. Edgar Pemberton's domestic comedy *Off Duty*, the comedian displayed considerable manly pathos and quiet humour in his sketch of the man with a nasty nature, which always made him suspect that every one has "a case against him," if the truth were known, and then passed at a bound to a wildly extravagant rôle in Harry Paulton's burlesque *Babes : or, Whines from the Wood*.

The latest perversion of the old story could not be seriously criticised. It had a strangely old-fashioned air, most of the characters being conceived in a spirit of extravagant imitation of the "penny plain and twopence coloured" figures of the old Skeltonian drama. It was, indeed, a burlesque of a burlesque, as if the author had written an ordinary burlesque of the familiar story, indulged in a heavy supper, been visited by nightmare, in which the peculiarities of his characters were magnified and distorted, and then substituted for his original burlesque the comical version which had come to him in dreamland.

The quaint, full-flavoured humour of Mr. Brough as Bill Booty, a smuggler of the good old-fashioned type, with buff-topped boots, long black ringlets, a villainous countenance, knives, pistols, and so on, galore, was of great assistance to the piece, and much of the "business" introduced by him was excessively funny. It is not easy to forget the extraordinary figure cut by Bill Booty as he strode about the stage in melodramatic fashion, cursing and stabbing everybody with charming impartiality, drinking

poison with a relish, and remarking that he had taken “not too much poison, but just poison enough;” a catch-phrase upon which he rang the changes somewhat too freely, but which helped to give the part its very distinct and amusing individuality.

At the Novelty Theatre, on December 8th, 1885, Mr. Brough appeared in the burlesque *Vanderdecken; or, The Flying Anglo-Dutchman's Phantom Penny Steamer*, a production which consisted of two acts of tedious tom-foolery, tempered with two or three touches of genuine humour. It was almost surprising that a comedian, capable of such sterling work as Mr. Brough was known to have done, should have cared to take a part so poorly equipped with humour, and in which the comicality verged upon vulgarity. Mr. Brough certainly displayed cleverness in his curiously faithful reproduction of the heavy buffoonery of a Whitechapel masher, but the part was an unpleasant one. There are things and people that no art can render tolerable, and 'Arry is perhaps the most intolerable creature in the semblance of humanity. It is not easy to

understand what purpose could be served by



transplanting to the stage the most offensive blot upon the page of London street-life.

In the *Japs*, also produced at the Novelty on September 19th, 1885, after a trial trip at Brighton, Mr. Brough was drily humorous as the Doomed Daimio, and made the most of a not too good part in a burlesque in which the "book" was not of the best, and the

"business" of a somewhat venerable type. It

was funny enough at first to hear Mr. Brough gravely announcing his intention of having his English-imported lamp-post stuffed; but when he had hitched his catch phrase, "I'll have it stuffed" to almost every one of the "properties" the idea grew absolutely thread-bare.

In 1887 Mr. Brough reappeared as Tony Lumpkin at the Opéra Comique; on February 26th as Major Rattan in *Ici on Parle Français*; at Miss Amy Roselle's benefit *matinée* at the Lyceum, on June 16th; as Mr. Bearder, M.P., in the revival of *The Churchwarden* at Terry's Theatre on October 17th, and as Snug at the Haymarket, on the occasion of Miss Kate Phillips' benefit on December 7th.

Mr. Brough as Busby, the foolish, hairless old man in *The Paper Chase*, at the Strand Theatre on June 9th, 1888, was extremely funny, and his Bardolph in Mr. Tree's production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Crystal Palace, on September 13th, was a ripe, mellow performance, full of humour of the true Shakespearean flavour.

The Robsonian phase of Mr. Brough's method was shown in his entirely admirable

creation of the part of the Burglar in *Editha's Burglar*, Mr. Edwin Cleary's dramatic version of Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's charming story of that name, produced at the Globe Theatre on December 22nd, 1888, the whimsical humour and rough pathos of the part being brought out by the comedian with excellent art. The burglar's uncouth admiration of the queer, polite little child, and his racy enjoyment of the oddity of the situation, were admirably conveyed by Mr. Brough, and the creation was an unqualified success.

Mr. Brough has always had a very soft place in his heart for children, and he felt all the pathos of this part so keenly that his tears at a certain point were very real. So, too, were those of the clever little girl who represented Editha; and at last they were obliged to make a whimsical bargain with each other at the commencement of the piece "not to cry to-night." But when the "psychological moment" came, Nature triumphed over Art, the tears *would* well up, and, as the child was caught up in Mr. Brough's arms, she would stammer out at the wings, between laughing and sobbing,



MR. LIONEL BROUGH AS MR. BUSBY IN "THE PAPER CHASE."



“I thought you p-p-promised you wouldn't cr-cr-cry to-night!”

When Mr. Tree revived *The Merry Wives of Windsor* at the Haymarket on January 2nd, 1889, Mr. Brough undertook the part of Mine Host of the Garter, investing it with a full-bodied, characteristic humour; and on August 7th he sailed from London for South Africa, where he received a cordial welcome, and played many of his leading parts with complete success.

During his South African tour Mr. Brough had some curious experiences of the pleasures of travelling by waggon across a roadless continent, and on one occasion, the wardrobes of the whole company having been sent on in advance, the last three nights at Johannesburg were played somewhat under difficulties, each member of the company having to agree to a sort of amicable communism, the make-ups and garments being thrown into a common stock; and, as it was, he had qualms upon the road to Pietermaritzburg lest after all he should be constrained to play Paul Pry in the unpicturesque costume of to-day.

It was one of Mr. Brough's pleasantest experiences in the Dark Continent to meet quite a number of men who had known him on and off the stage in London, one of them not having met him since the days when he was playing at the Standard Theatre, in Shoreditch, and used to have "larks" with the cabman, Toole and himself changing clothes in the cab and astonishing the Jehu at the end of the journey by appearing as two quite different "fares" to those whom he had taken on board in the far East.

Upon his return from South Africa Mr. Brough made his reappearance on the London stage as Mathew Vanderkooen, landlord of the Golden Lamb, Bruges, in *La Cigale*, Mr. Burnand and Mr. A'Beckett's English version of Messrs. Chivot and Duru's *opéra comique*, the music being by MM. Audran and Ivan Caryll, produced at the Lyric Theatre on October 9th, 1890. The authors did not do too much for Vanderkooen, but Mr. Brough managed to make some dramatic bricks of acceptable quality with his meagre allowance of straw, and his make-up was grotesque

in the extreme. And grotesque make-ups are sometimes serviceable as well as attractive to an audience, for on the occasion of an outbreak of fire in an electrically-lighted Christmas-tree, it was Mr. Brough's presence of mind, aided by Vanderkooopen's conical hat, which extinguished the flames, and very probably prevented a panic, if not a grave conflagration.

Mr. Brough has often been accused of "gagging," and sometimes it might not be difficult to excuse such a course; but upon the night of this accident he was for once applauded for a "happy thought" in this direction. When "La Gloria" is to be married, and "taken off the stage," Mr. Brough upon this occasion remarked, with a significant gesture in the direction of the partially burnt Christmas-tree, "*That* light's gone out for ever!" whereupon the audience applauded what they thought was a ready-witted interpolation. As a matter of fact, the line is in the "book," and it was only Vanderkooopen's *gesture* which was "gag."

In his private capacity Mr. Brough is essentially *bon camarade*, and Percy Villa, the old-fashioned house in South Lambeth which has

been his home for more than twenty years, and was once that of Fauntleroy, the banker, is the centre of much pleasant hospitality and good-fellowship. Here, with his family, and animal pets, Mr. Brough enjoys such leisure as the work of his profession allows him.

A magnificent brindled boar-hound, of whom the curious and valuable Chinese dog is comically jealous, a floating menagerie of ducks of all sorts, and a "low-comedy" goose of most familiar and insinuating habits, are amongst the living proofs of the comedian's love for animals; while within doors a host of fine old engravings and modern caricatures of brother histrions testify to his artistic taste and irrepressible sense of humour. Hogarth and Phil May, amongst others, represent the "ancient and modern" schools of pictorial satire, and a number of fine engravings of players of the past are of exceptional interest to all lovers and students of the stage.

Amongst Mr. Brough's indoor treasures and curios, too, are a meerschaum pipe presented to him by the Prince of Wales, and a large silver box, now used for biscuits, but originally

intended to hold tobacco, and presented to Professor Anderson, the famous conjuror, by Abraham Lincoln.

But it is in pictures and books that the comedian's home is peculiarly rich. Scarcely a square inch of wall but is covered with some delicate water-colour, warm oil-painting, soft mezzotint, rich old engraving, or what not, many of the works being of high artistic merit, as well as of exceptional interest and value for their associations' sake.

Upon the side of the handsome mantelpiece in the pretty and roomy drawing-room a dainty Cosway study of a girl, finished with all the delicacy of a miniature, is in the excellent company of a fine seascape by Clarkson Stanfield, a quaint example of Rowlandson, and a vigorous sketch by Hogarth of John Quick, the favourite comedian of George III., and the original Tony Lumpkin and Bob Acres, two of Mr. Brough's best-known impersonations. The drawing was made upon the back of a ledger, and is full of character. A thoroughly "actor's picture," too, in Mr. Brough's collection is a fine oil-painting of Edmund Kean as a boy, perched upon a

table, and reciting vigorously with the precocious genius which was ere long to make him the brightest star of the stage for some twenty years. Very interesting, too, is a clever river scene by Joseph Jefferson,—“Rip” Jefferson,—an excellent piece of work, and doubly remarkable from the fact that it was painted at one sitting; as, too, was a bold charcoal seascape by George Sheffield, so effective and full of detail that it seems almost incredible that he executed it for Mr. Brough in an hour and a half.

Mr. Brough naturally sets exceptional store upon a quaint little coloured drawing by his brother, Robert Brough, called “Two Goddesses : Pomona and Flora at a feast of Bacchus,” representing, with a humour worthy of Rowlandson or Cruikshank, an applewoman and an ancient flower-girl hobnobbing over a glass of gin.

In another charming room Mr. Brough has a rare collection of Zoffanys, including a very fine portrait of King, the close friend of David Garrick, the original Puff in *The Critic*, and, moreover, the diplomatic stage-manager who locked Sheridan in the green-room of Drury

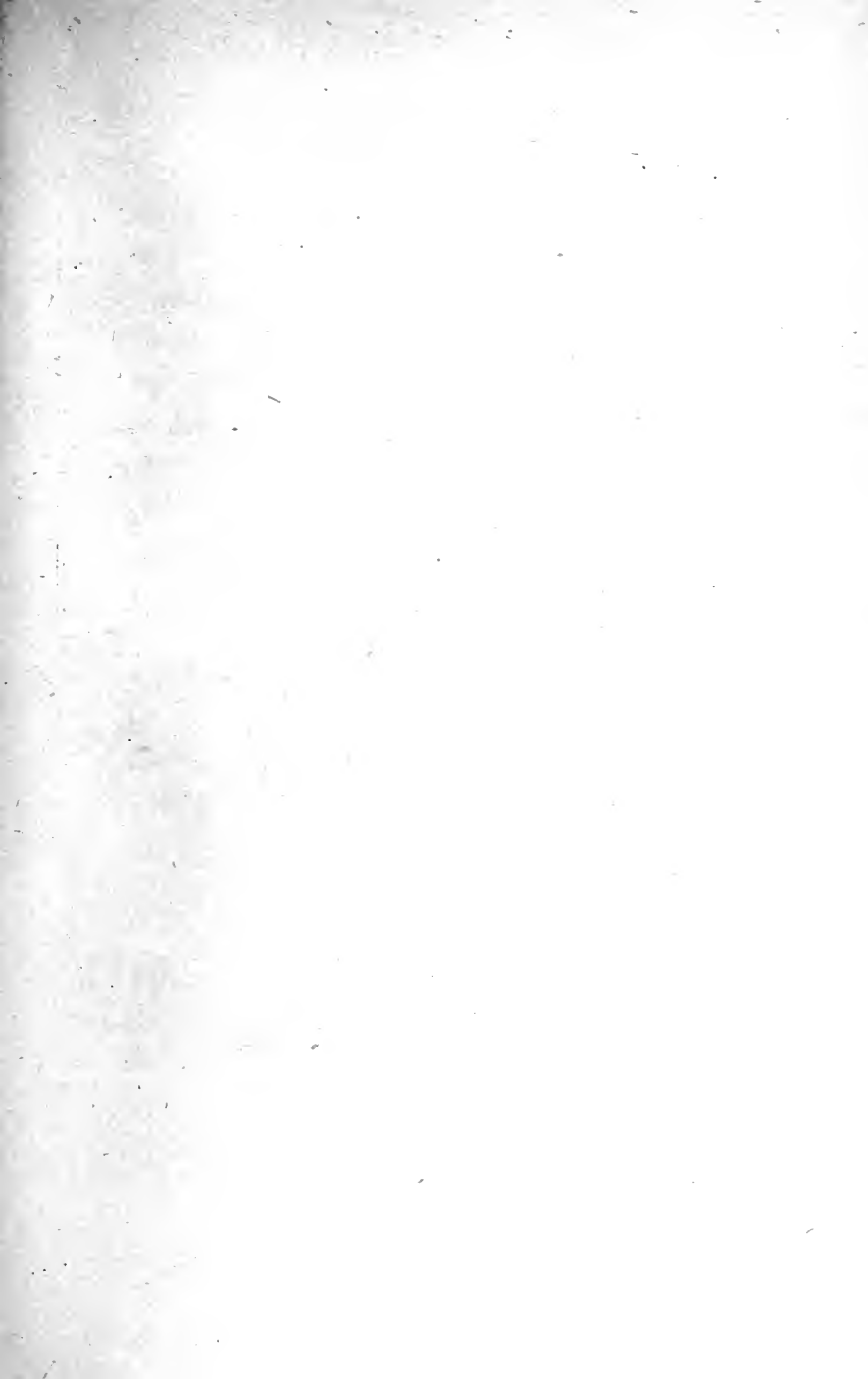
Lane, with anchovy toast, a couple of bottles of claret, and the unfinished prompt copy of the play, as the only hope of getting the work completed.

Books everywhere—for Mr. Brough's theatrical library is extensive and valuable—rare old china, unique original drawings by such modern knights of the pencil as Fred Barnard, Alfred Bryan, Phil May, Matt Stretch, and other notable men, including some extremely humorous burlesque fancy portraits of celebrities by Barnard, such as "Robert Browning"—a policeman trussed and suspended before a cheerful fire; and everywhere portraits and character-sketches of old friends and brother-artists, Henry Irving and J. L. Toole being conspicuously present.

Of this kind of professional souvenir, too, Mr. Brough's collection of photographs is enormous and curiously interesting, a dive or two amongst them at random resulting in unique catches, such as a portrait of Henry Irving as a very youthful actor, when he was appearing with Mr. Brough in Liverpool, and his fame was as yet only a dream—perhaps not

even that ; and an extremely interesting pair of photographs show groups of the old company at the Queen's Theatre, Long Acre, in 1867, when the splendid cast of *The Double Marriage*, in which Mr. Brough made his first hit, and Miss Henrietta Hodson her first appearance upon the London boards, included Mrs. Dyas, Miss Henrietta Hodson, Miss Everard, Henry Irving, J. L. Toole, John Clayton, Charles Wyndham, Charles Seyton, and Lionel Brough.

Amid these artistic and pleasant surroundings Mr. Brough loves to spend every hour that his work permits him to call his own, and here, as the head of the family, he welcomes its other members from time to time in his cordial, kindly fashion. Country-born, the popular comedian loves his bit of garden, hemmed in as it has been of late years by the ruthless builder ; and twenty years of peaceful life within its walls, surrounded by his wife and children, have made it very dear to the comedian, who is as unaffected and kindly off the stage as he is mirthful and popular upon it.





RUTLAND BARRINGTON (IN "THE GONDOLIERS"). FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY BARRAUD.

As sung by
Rutland Barrington

So away little girls' - can't
turn to little girls like you

Josh Barr.

RUTLAND BARRINGTON.

IF Mr. Rutland Barrington's artistic temperament had not led him to adopt the stage as a profession he would have made a delightful dean, an entirely admirable archdeacon, or the most beaming of bland and benevolent bishops.

There is a suavity, a benignity, a genial humour about the popular Savoy actor which would have been peculiarly becoming in an ecclesiastical dignitary, and would have harmonised perfectly with archidiaconal gaiters, or the episcopal apron itself. Physically, too, there is a rotundity, a curvilinear development, an air of optimistic satisfaction with this best of all possible worlds, which are essentially characteristic of a life steeped in the odour of sanctity, combined with a quiet humour extremely

clerical in its tone. It would not be difficult to picture Mr. Barrington evolving polished epigrams in the refined and cosy seclusion of an oak-panelled study, or even delivering cultured and scholarly sermons from the pulpit of a moderately "high" church; but the play-going public have reason to congratulate themselves that his taste induced him to take to the stage.

In his private life Mr. Barrington is an artist, *au bouts des ongles*, painting pictures on canvas with as much facility as he does on the stage, his charming house in the Grosvenor Road being full of practical proofs of his prowess with the palette and the brush—delicate river scenes on the Mole and some seascapes painted at Hunstanton showing much technical skill and artistic feeling.

Painting, fishing, and cricket, foot-ball, lawn-tennis, and athletics evidence the many-sidedness of the actor's tastes when the limelight and the enervating atmosphere of the stage are exchanged for the sunlight and the health-giving open air; and the general impression made by Mr. Barrington's home and private life is that they are above all else English,

manly, and refined. That he has won esteem and affection as a man, as well as admiration as an actor, is proved among other ways by the presence in his studio of a handsome davenport, presented to him by his brother-artists of the Savoy company when he severed his connection with them for a while, and undertook the responsibilities of management at the St. James's Theatre ; and a Queen Anne punch-ladle appropriately represents the regard of Mr. Burnand for the artist who impersonated Pickwick and the Baker in the clever dramatic cantata based upon Dickens's famous book.

Mr. Barrington's house is delightfully artistic in every detail, the actor's taste being supplemented by that of his wife, whose pretty drawing-room, in crimson and gold, black and primrose, has been decorated from her own designs, and a wealth of pictures and books, of photographs and stage souvenirs, of screens and fans, of *bric-à-brac* and curios, of etchings and embroideries, complete the sense of art-sympathy which is the dominant note in the home life of the actor and his clever wife.

Caricatures of Mr. and Mrs. Barrington

engaged in their favourite pastime of gudgeon fishing in a Thames back-water, and of the actor as Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado*, certainly one of his most successful creations, supply the touch of humour without which so true a comedian's home would be incomplete; and quite a number of Mr. Barrington's own paintings show the versatility of an artist whose range includes acting, singing, music, and painting.

Mr. Barrington has been fortunate enough to win popularity with exceptional facility, and in an unusually brief space of time. Born at Penge on January 15th, 1853, it was only in 1874 that he made his *début* as an actor, upon the stage of the Olympic Theatre, on September 1st, as Sir George Barclay in *Clancarty*, and soon afterwards appeared as Lafleur in *The Two Orphans*. Then followed some three years of miscellaneous acting in connection with Miss Emily Faithfull's readings at the Egyptian Hall, and Mrs. Howard Paul's famous entertainment. But it was not until November 17th, 1877, that Mr. Barrington had his first real opportunity, and turned it to excellent account as Dr. Daly, the Vicar, in Messrs.

Gilbert and Sullivan's delightfully funny comic opera, *The Sorcerer*, produced at the Opéra Comique. In this impersonation Mr. Barrington's unctuous vein of humour found full scope, and the result was a success so marked as to raise the young actor at once into a conspicuous and important position upon the stage; and this kindly judgment of the critics and the public was justified and confirmed when, on May 25th, 1878, Mr. Barrington created with immediate success the part of Captain Corcoran in the same author's famous opera *H.M.S. Pinafore; or, The Lass that Loved a Sailor*.

From his first association with the Gilbert-Sullivan comic operas, to which Mr. Barrington's method was excellently adapted, the comedian's success was assured. He had found his opportunity, and had made the most of it, and had succeeded in establishing once and for ever a strong claim upon the favour of play-goers.

The quiet, unobtrusive humour characteristic of Mr. Barrington enabled him, when the *Pirates of Penzance* was produced at the Opéra Comique, on April 3rd, 1880, to again

lift into prominence and importance the



MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON AS ARCHIBALD GROSVENOR IN "PATIENCE."

part of a Sergeant of Police; and his whimsical, apparently unconscious comicality pleased the audience completely, and added to his already excellent reputation as an artist with brains enough to evolve an original conception of a part, and conscientiousness enough to work hard to make his embodiment of it as perfect in every detail as thought and care could make it.

It was on April 23rd, 1881, that Mr. Barrington found his next great chance, as the idyllic poet Archibald Grosvenor, in *Patience*; or, *Bunthorne's Bride*, produced

at the Opéra Comique. The placidly self-satisfied *poseur* in black velvet, with his ample physical proportions and feeble intellectual calibre, his absurd affectations and calm contempt for less poetic souls than his own, was not only an exceptionally amusing stage figure, but a careful and artistically moderate satire upon a class of society types, familiar to many of those who greeted the actor's creation with delighted laughter. Mr. Barrington's solemn imperturbability, his sublime assumption of unconsciousness of the ridiculous side of Archibald Grosvenor, his studied sentimentality and supreme self-complacency, were rendered with most admirable art ; and, although it did not absolutely kill the pseudo-æstheticism of that period, had certainly an effect in the much-needed direction of the snubbing and ignoring of the odd folk who then over-ran society, and earned an artistic reputation cheaply by affectation and a foolish, incomprehensible, or at best semi-intelligible, shibboleth. The creation was an admirable one, and to this day "Willow Waly" and "The Silver Churn" are popular, and identified with the quiet humour

of this excellent actor. The idyllic poet, contrasted with the "Chancery Lane young man," the "Somerset House young man," the "Very delectable, highly respectable, threepenny 'bus young man," was a refreshingly humorous figure, and the part remains one of the pleasantest memories of an actor who has in his time done much excellent work.

In November 1882 Mr. Barrington created the *rôle* of the Earl of Mountararat in *Iolanthe*; and on January 5th, 1884, that of King Hildebrand in *Princess Ida*, subsequently reappearing in a revival of *The Sorcerer* on October 11th.

During 1885 Mr. Barrington created the part of Dr. Dozey in Mr. Sydney Grundy's clever comedy, *The Silver Shield*, produced for the first time at Miss Amy Roselle's *matinée* on May 19th, in which *rôle* his suave ponderosity and sleek wiliness in condemning all actresses who were not young and pretty made the insinuating clerical hypocrite one of the most amusing figures on the stage. But his principal success during that year was his extremely clever creation of Pooh-Bah in *The Mikado*, a part so admirably suited to his stage

method, and made by his talent so humorous and distinctive a personage, that *Punch* has referred to the comedian as “Mr. PooH-Barrington” from that day to this.

In *The Mikado*, one of the quaintest and cleverest of all the famous Gilbert and Sullivan series, cynical, grim, graceful, thoroughly human and sympathetic on occasion, and full of curiously unconventional fancies, produced at the Savoy on March 14th, 1885, Mr. Barrington was provided with perhaps the most irresistibly droll part which it had hitherto been his good fortune to create, and he entered into the spirit of the impersonation with artistic thoroughness. He has done nothing better than PooH-Bah, the Japanese pluralist—First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Chief Justice, Commander-in-Chief, Master of the Buckhounds, Groom of the Back Stairs, Archbishop of Titipu, Lord Mayor, and a dozen other salaried officials rolled into one, and his stolid imperturbability was *impayable*.

Nothing could have been funnier in its apparent unconsciousness of humour than his advice in various capacities to the Mikado,

culminating in his First Lord of the Treasury opinion : "Of course, as First Lord of the Treasury. I could propose a special vote that would cover all expenses, if it were not that as leader of the Opposition it would be my duty to resist it, tooth and nail. Or, as Paymaster-General, I could so cook the accounts that as Lord High Auditor I should never discover the fraud. But then, as Archbishop of Titipu, it would be my duty to denounce my dishonesty, and give myself into my own custody as First Commissioner of Police."

In this extravagantly humorous passage the author's curious wit was made even more effective by the dry drollery of the actor, who enunciated his ridiculous statements with a solemn pomposity that was absolutely official in its actuality.

It is not difficult to recognise the humour of such a *rôle* as that of Pooh-Bah, a creature of immense pride, tracing his ancestry to "a protoplasmal primordial atomic globule," and who was "born sneering," yet is not unwilling to "let himself out" to shoddy society functions, to retail State secrets at a very low

figure, and to greedily accept “insults”—*anglicé* bribes. Yet in the hands of an inferior actor a temptation to exaggerate might easily have degraded a fine conception into broad caricature, but Mr. Barrington displayed an artistic restraint which was entirely commendable, and by his quiet, unobtrusive humour made Pooh-Bah one of the most completely whimsical and successful figures of a piece conspicuously humorous in every detail. A lapse into exaggeration would have been fatal to the perfect realisation of a remarkably clever conception, and it was true artistic instinct which enabled the actor to impersonate a highly original and subtly elaborated character without a fault.

The success of *The Mikado* was immense, and it was not until January 22nd, 1887, that Mr. Barrington was called upon to appear in a new part, that of Sir Despard Murgatroyd, in *Ruddigore*, a production of which Mr. Gilbert remarked, after it had run for a week, and undergone the ordeal of criticism, that he proposed “altering the title of the piece, and calling it *Kensington Gore*; or, *Not so Good as*

the Mikado." As Sir Despard Murgatroyd Mr. Barrington thoroughly entered into the spirit of the part, and gave one more proof of his complete appreciation of Gilbertian humour.

During this year Mr. Barrington also appeared as the Judge in *Judge and Jury*, at Miss Amy Roselle's benefit *matinée* at the Lyceum on June 16th, and on December 14th in a piece called *The Carthorpe Case*, at a Vaudeville *matinée*, in which he impersonated a healthy, hearty young squire with much *bonhomie* and good-fellowship.

The year 1888 was somewhat of an eventful one for the popular actor. After taking part in revivals at the Savoy of *The Pirates of Penzance* and *The Mikado*, giving a most amusing impersonation of Chrysos, the art-patron, in *Pygmalion and Galatea*, at Mr. Abud's benefit *matinée* at the Lyceum on March 21st, and appearing at Miss Angela Fenton's *matinée* at the Avenue on April 26th in *Trespassers, Beware!* and as Mr. Barnes of New York at the Olympic on May 23rd in his own dramatic version of the story of

that name, called *To the Death*, Mr. Barrington left the Savoy Theatre, and went into management for himself.

When he assumed for the first time the cares of management by opening the St. James's Theatre on October 13th, 1888, with a cynical play called *The Dean's Daughter*, by Messrs. F. C. Philips and Sydney Grundy, great things were hoped from the collaboration of two men, one of whom had done some clever work as a novelist, while the other ranked amongst the most promising dramatists of the day. Although based upon an undramatic and unpleasant story, playgoers, wearied with innocuous conventionality on the one hand and rabid sensationalism on the other, looked for good work from writers who could at least be trusted to spare them a depressing drizzle of didactic platitudes of the copybook-heading order, and to give them humour, pathos, and picturesqueness, all of which Mr. Grundy has at command. And the play proved to be written with humour and naturalism, and to have a sufficient leaven of tenderness; but in effect it served chiefly to

enable Mr. Barrington to create an effective character with excellent art.



MR. RUTLAND BARRINGTON AS
THE VERY REV. AUGUSTUS
ST. AUBYN.

As the Very Rev. Augustus St. Aubyn, Dean of Southwick, a repulsively hypocritical, canting, and selfish cleric, eager to sell his pretty daughter to the highest bidder, Mr. Barrington proved that by clever acting a naturally repellent character like that of the sanctimonious Dean may be rendered tolerable, and the talent of the actor be permitted to condone the contemptible characteristics of the figure which he has had the courage to create. Mr. Barrington's unctuous

Dean was just one of those conceptions which show the true artist. He was a scoundrel—

but an amusing scoundrel. If the actor had accentuated the villainy of the clerical reprobate, and ignored the humorous side of the character, the *rôle* would have been as impossible of acceptance by an audience as it would have been unpleasant to create. But, by a nice perception of the possibilities of the part, the Dean became as skilful and notable a figure in its way as Mr. Barrington's other clerical impersonations, the Vicar in *The Sorcerer* and Dr. Dozey in *The Silver Shield*.

Then came the production of Mr. Gilbert's comedy, *Brantingham Hall*, on November 29th, in which Mr. Barrington created the *rôle* of Mr. Thursby; but his unlucky star was again in the ascendant, and in the following year Mr. Barrington fell back upon his acting talent, and appeared in various *rôles* and places to the complete satisfaction of the public. February 7th found him at the Comedy Theatre, where he played at different times the parts of the Baker and Mr. Pickwick in Mr. Burnand's dramatic cantata, *Pickwick*. On March 27th he created the part of Lieut.-Col. Cadbury in Mr. Sydney Grundy's play, *Merry Margate*, which

proved to be one of the most satisfactory of the *dramatis personæ*; on May 16th he gave a breezy, manly sketch of Admiral Brabazon in Mr. Cecil Raleigh's comedy *The Inheritance*, produced at a Comedy *matinée*; on June 12th he took part in Lady Monckton's *matinée* at St. George's Hall; played the part of Colonel Percival in a duologue called *A Chance Interview*, written by Mrs. Hugh Bell, and that of Shag, a humorous servant, in *Tobacco Jars*, an operetta, the libretto of which was by Lady Monckton. On May 28th, at a Savoy *matinée*, he created the part of Christopher in Mr. Walter Frith's operetta, *Locked In*; and on September 24th, after a trial *matinée* in May, he appeared as Tosser in Messrs. G. P. Hawtrey and Edward Solomon's musical version of *The Area Belle*.

It was on December 7th, 1889, that Mr. Barrington reappeared as a member of the Savoy company, and created with immediate success the *rôle* of Giuseppe Palmieri in Messrs. Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera, *The Gondoliers*. Here again, as one of the men supposed to be King of Baratavia, Mr.

Barrington displayed much quiet humour, more particularly as the democratic monarch who polished his own crown and sceptre, and delighted to “run on little errands for the Ministers of State.” Now and then Mr. Barrington lapsed for a moment into certain grimaces and gestures which, in the opinion of those who knew and liked his dry, droll humour, appeared rather matter for regret than congratulation, but the impersonation as a whole was one of the most humorous in a decidedly clever production.

Every one was glad to welcome Mr. Barrington back to the scene of so many of his successes; and as he is too true an artist to presume upon his popularity, and become either slovenly in his execution or unduly obtrusive in his method, there is every reason to anticipate that for years to come he will continue to add to the wholesome amusement of the public by the aid of his excellent and, for the most part, unexaggerated humour. The comedian is, in his way, a power; and it is not too much to say that the admirable work done by Mr. Barrington and his brother-comedians at the Savoy, in the

brilliant Gilbert-Sullivan series of productions, has not only afforded tens of thousands of people incalculable pleasure in a clean and honest fashion, but that he and his fellow-artists, in their association with that particular class of stage work, have done something towards achieving that desirable end which is usually understood by that hackneyed and rather objectionable phrase, "the elevation of the drama."

On March 6th, 1891, Mr. Barrington, with the other members of the Savoy company, had the honour of appearing in *The Gondoliers*, at Windsor Castle, before Her Majesty the Queen.

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